

Costa Rica

I. A Rich Land & a Contented People

By Hamilton Fyfe

Author of "The Real Mexico," etc.

SCENICALLY and climatically, Costa Rica, discovered in 1502 by Columbus on his fourth and last voyage, may be considered one of the most suitable of the Caribbean states for European settlement. Tropical forests and savannahs, picturesque mountain-chains, a number of rapid yet navigable rivers, and a generally healthy climate, combine to render this small Central American republic exceedingly attractive. The mountains do not form a continuous chain; they are divided into two main groups, north-west and south-east, the former including the volcanoes Irazú, Turrialba, Baba, and Paos. From their destructive peaks have issued at different periods appalling eruptions, the last as recently as 1910. More than one half of the superficial area of Costa Rica, lying between 2,900 ft. and 6,825 ft. above the sea, is covered with virgin forests of valuable timber and vegetation so dense that it is almost impossible to enter the interior except by way of the rivers.

Struck by its fertility and by the variety of its profuse vegetation, Columbus, when he sailed along its Atlantic shore, named it the Rich Coast. No one has ever disputed the

fitness of the title. The great explorer named also what is now the chief port on the Atlantic shore of the republic. He called it Puerto de Limón, from the limes which he saw growing. Landing there from the steamer, the visitor sees a town consisting mostly of shacks and bamboo huts, with wharves, warehouses, railway workshops and sidings, all presenting a busy appearance.

Beyond the area of human occupation spread swamps and forest, filled with tropical trees, flowers, orchids, and birds, while deep within the jungle lurk deadly snakes and stealthy jaguars. It is an unhealthy place, and when the train carrying one away towards the

chief centres of population on the slope towards the Pacific clears the tropical zone and begins to climb the mountain range between the two oceans, one feels relief from ever-present danger and fills one's lungs contentedly with the fresh air of the hills.

The Atlantic shore is, however, the only region of Costa Rica which has a really bad climate. The country has been called the healthiest tropical region in the New World. On the high plateau which occupies the whole of the interior, the weather resembles

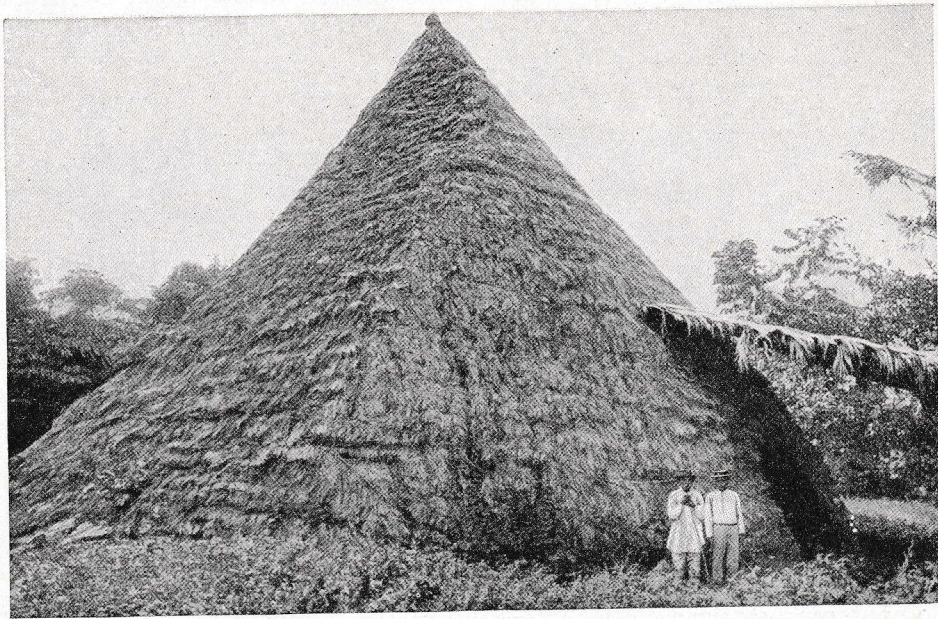


SUNSHINE IN HER HEART

Mixed blood, Spanish and West Indian, runs in this Costa Rican girl's veins. To the one strain she owes her charming grace and to the other her sunny good temper

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service

Copyrighted, 1922, by The Amalgamated Press (1922), Limited



THATCH RESIDENCE OF THE CHIEF OF THE TALAMANCAS

The scattered Indian tribes of the Atlantic forest zone of Costa Rica are grouped together in a single family under the name of Talamanca. Their numbers, greatly reduced in recent years, are now estimated at about 3,000. They made such a stubborn resistance against their Spanish conquerors that history records them as having fought "with greater valour than any other nation of the Indies"

Photo, H. Wimmer

perpetual spring in some latitude where spring means hot days and pleasantly cool nights. At San José, the capital, the mercury in a Fahrenheit thermometer never falls below 60, and does not often rise above 80 degrees. The houses have no fireplaces; if you wanted an overcoat there, it would have to be sent out to you.

The town of San José lies in a rich and charming valley between high mountains. The geological nature of the country is impressed on you at once when you are told that eight volcanoes can be seen among them. From one or other of these smoke is pretty sure to be gently drifting in the clear, calm air. It is not often that they show more active signs of life, but the inhabitants are glad to see the smoke; indeed, if they did not see it, they would fear the worst. The belief is that underground fires and gases find a vent so long as any of the craters acts as a chimney; if the chimneys got stopped up there would be a fearful rending of the earth's surface. Because of the risk of such disasters the houses of the Costa Ricans are usually of one storey, at most of two, and many are built still with light mud walls,

though red brick is becoming more common.

Cartago, the old capital, was three times destroyed by earthquakes, the last time in 1910. It lies higher than San José, and has an even better climate for those whose hearts are not affected by altitude. The slopes of the mountain above it are like those of a Scottish moor. The railway from Puerto Limón to the Pacific port, Punta Arenas, runs through Cartago after leaving the capital. Another port, Boca del Toro, has been created by enterprise and ingenuity out of a swamp. For many months sea-water was pumped over the swamp, and within a year the sand and shells which came through the pipe from the sea formed a hard, white surface, on which a town was built, and in which trees and flowers flourish.

Such transformations are unusual in the Central American states, and this surprises those who know the Costa Ricans well, since they are not famous for their energy. Yet, by comparison with most of their neighbours, they make a good showing. Their trade in coffee, for example, has greatly increased. In

COSTA RICA & ITS PEOPLE

1850, when this product began to be known, especially in France and England, for its excellent flavour, only fourteen million pounds were exported. In a quarter of a century that quantity was nearly trebled, and now it has gone very far beyond that.

A good deal of the credit for the development of this and other resources

of Costa Rica—bananas, for instance—must be given to the American and British planters who moved into the Republic from the United States and the West Indies. The land was wisely offered on very easy terms, which benefited the country as much as the settlers; they improved methods of cultivation and sending to market, and



SOCIETY BELLES OF COSTA RICA'S CAPITAL

Costa Rica is said to be "the healthiest country in the New World," and, judging from the appearance of these handsome girls of its capital, San José, the climate deserves its reputation. Except for short intervals San José has been the capital for the last hundred years, the seat of government having been transferred from Cartago because of the eruptions of its volcanic neighbour Irazú

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service



WEST INDIAN WORKERS IN A BANANA-PACKING CENTRE

Americans have played an important part in the commercial development of Costa Rica, and have virtually monopolised the banana trade. One American business concern holds thousands of acres of banana plantations, cultivated and worked on the most scientific principles. These plantations present a wonderful spectacle of luxuriant vegetation and provide labour for a large number of negroes from the West Indies, both in the field and in the packing-sheds

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service

so helped on the prosperity of the people. Of course, there is still ample room for vigorous and intelligent utilisation of the Costa Ricans' resources. They have many good qualities, but they are not likely to undertake this themselves. Their steady-going, peaceable disposition, however, gives Costa Rica a far better name as a country for settlers than

any other Central American state enjoys. It has not been disgraced and damaged by the frequent revolutions which have disturbed the rest. Even when dictators have arisen, there has been no fighting to speak of, and next to no bloodshed.

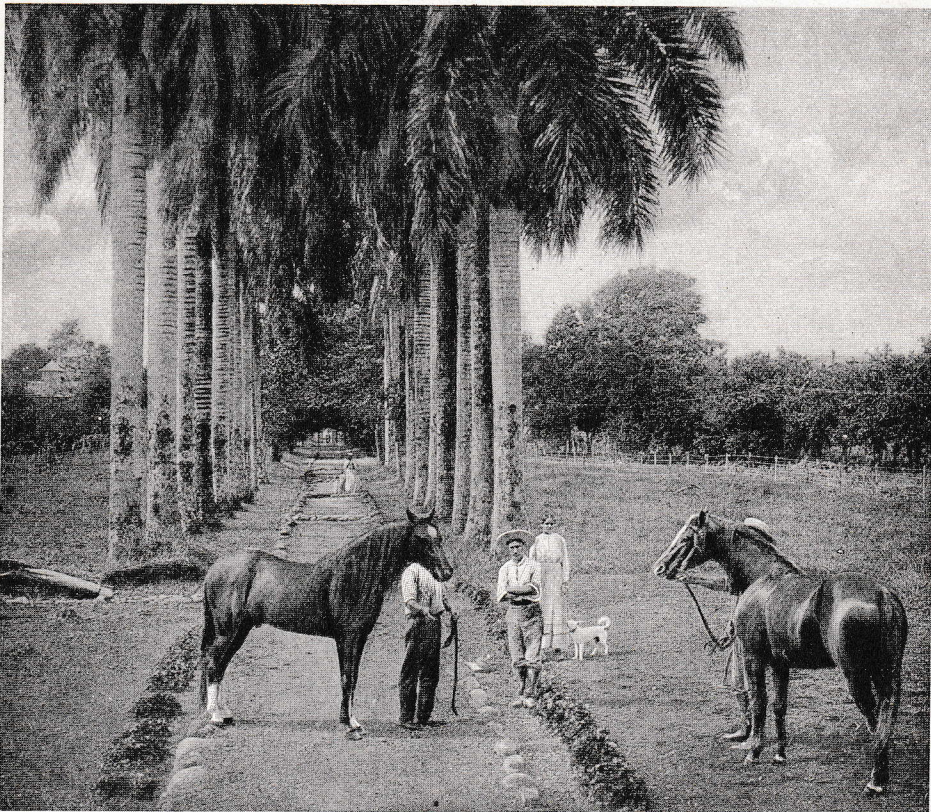
The chief reason for this uncommon proof of good sense is the faint interest taken in politics, apparently due to the

COSTA RICA & ITS PEOPLE

existence of a peasant proprietor class, which values stability and order. The small farmers derive far more satisfaction from working their land and disposing of their produce than they could find in the feverish excitement of killing each other in civil war for no reason except to change one tyrant for another. Wealth is more evenly distributed in Costa Rica than elsewhere. A more genuine effort is made to educate the people: school-attendance is not merely compulsory on paper: parents are made to send their children, save in the very remote districts, where there are no schools. Political life is comparatively clean, governments do not employ large numbers of spies to watch what their opponents are doing, ministers attend to the business of the

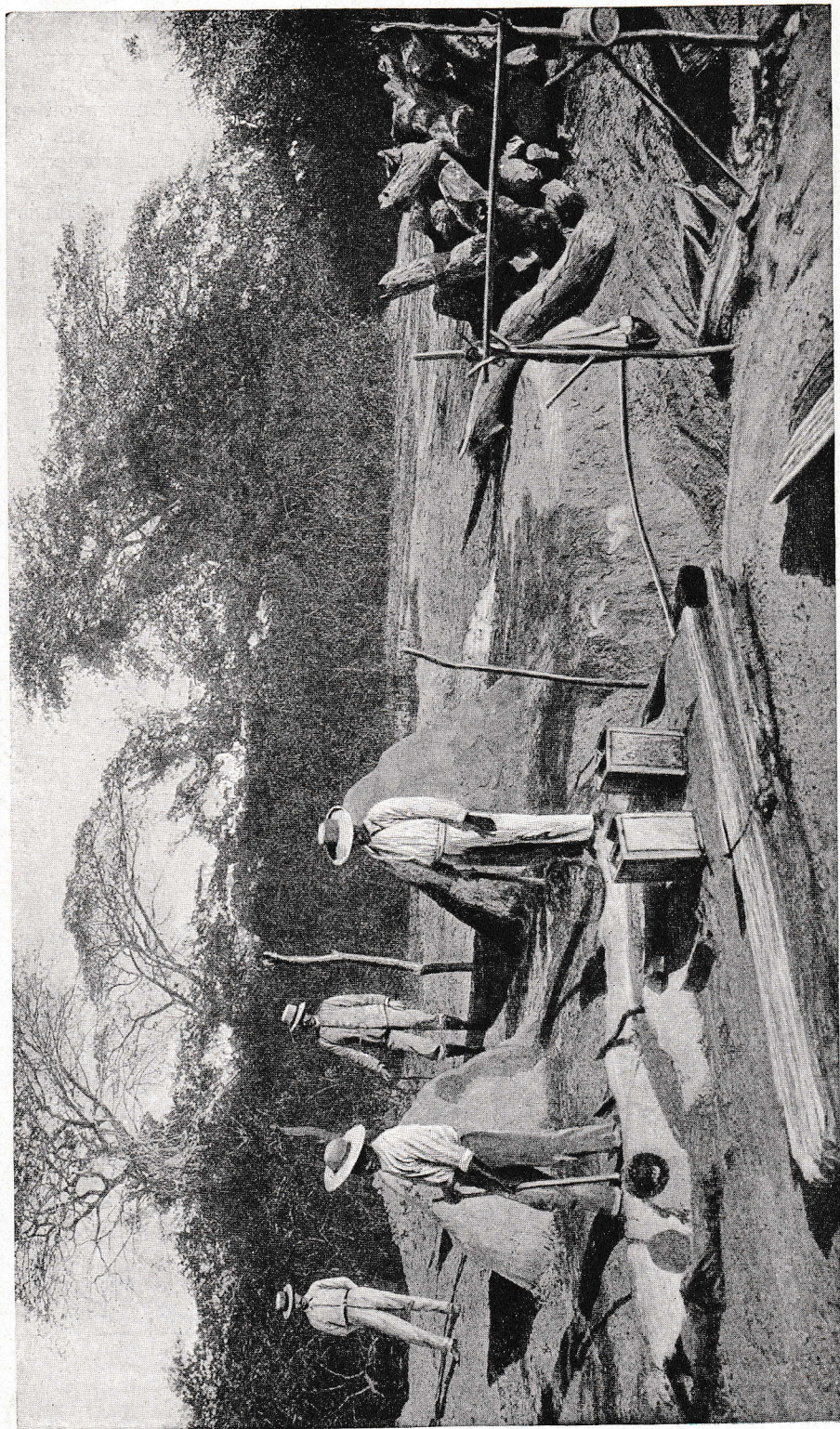
country, party strife is rarely roused beyond a moderate degree of fervour.

The man who did more than any other to set the feet of the Costa Ricans on the path of good sense and prosperity was an Indian who could neither read nor write. His name was Tomás Guardia. He was employed in 1872 to carry out a revolution, his name having become known as that of a daring cavalry leader during a war with Nicaragua. At the head of a hundred men he surprised the capital, overpowered the "army" with the greatest ease, and seized the government offices, driving out the president. The plan of his employers was that one of them should be chosen to fill the vacancy, but Guardia fancied the position for himself, and he was duly elected. On the whole



ON THE MODEL FARM OF EL SALVADOR IN COSTA RICA

Some two-thirds of the population of the Republic are peasant proprietors. The land is wonderfully fertile, ample sunshine and frequent rains ensuring splendid crops. As many domestic animals are imported by the State to improve the native breeds, stock-farming is developing rapidly. The one enemy of farmers—and that only in certain districts—is the huge, migratory vampire bat, which can bleed the strongest animal to death in one night.



WORKING THE SALT MINES ON THE SHORES OF THE GULF OF NICOYA IN THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA
Costa Rica is often known as the Land of Bananas, and from the innumerable plantations a colossal amount of this fruit is exported annually to the United States and Europe. Although its resources are not yet fully drawn upon Costa Rica—which is Spanish for "Rich Coast"—has well earned its name, and has untold wealth both above and below ground, salt being but one of the many minerals in which its earth is rich

COSTA RICA & ITS PEOPLE

his reign was in many ways a benefit to his country, though he left it with a heavy burden of debt hanging round its neck.

It was owing to the rivalry between two English bankers, who each wanted to arrange a loan for the Republic, that the revolution was planned. The money supplied was to be expended upon the making of railways; and as soon as Guardia was firmly in power, he agreed that the loan should be raised in London and should amount nominally to £3,400,000. Of that sum it is said that only one million went into the state treasury. The remainder seems to have been swallowed up in commissions and other forms of chicanery before any credit was transferred from London to San José. Thus, by allowing himself to fall among thieves, President Guardia put the nation under the necessity of paying interest upon a very large sum of money which it had not received.

He also muddled the laying of the railway for which the loan was floated, though here there was a certain method in his madness. The material was landed at Punta Arenas after its voyage from England round Cape Horn. Clearly the line to San José ought to have been begun at Punta Arenas. But Guardia was afraid that the ox-carters, who saw their living about to be taken from them by the railway, would provoke a revolution. The Spanish upper class was opposed to any change, and the mass of the Indian and half-caste population was so ignorant and superstitious that its feelings could have been worked upon and its fear of the unknown aroused.

The president accordingly had the rails, the engines, and the carriages all dragged up and over the mountains in ox-carts and landed at the capital, where with great ceremony he laid the first rail and got the work started. The expense of this proceeding was so heavy that for a very long time the completion of the line was delayed, and its cost was far greater than it need have been if it had been built in the natural way. The railway has been costly to the people in another direction. It was from the first made use of by the government as an instrument



THE CHOSEN OF THE PEOPLE

This thoughtful-faced chief exerts nominal authority over the remaining Indian tribes in the district of Talamanca, who retained their independence despite the efforts of the Conquistadores to subjugate them

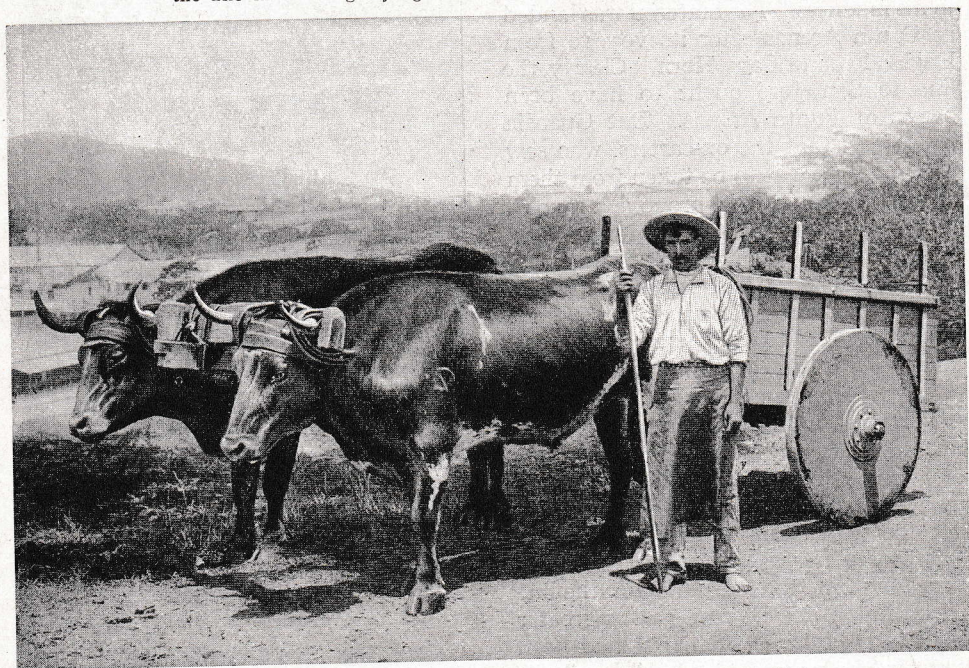
Photo, Percy F. Martin

of patronage. Numbers of hangers-on made their living out of it without doing any useful work. The staff was always far larger than it need have been. The guards of trains were compared to



"GOOD PULL-UP FOR CARTERS" IN SAN JOSÉ

Nearly all the heavy transport of Costa Rica is still done by ox-wagon, the carters travelling in long caravans such as this, halted outside a wine-shop in the capital. Joy-riding on the tramway that runs straight through the town is an evening amusement of many women, who travel up and down the line in the brightly-lighted cars, a mutual admiration society



SLOW BUT SURE SURVIVES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Light carts with solid wheels, employed to prevent the mud on the bad roads from clogging the axles, are the vehicles in most common use in Costa Rica. They are drawn by a pair of oxen, which the carter guides with a long goad, whistling to them when he wants them to stop or to move on

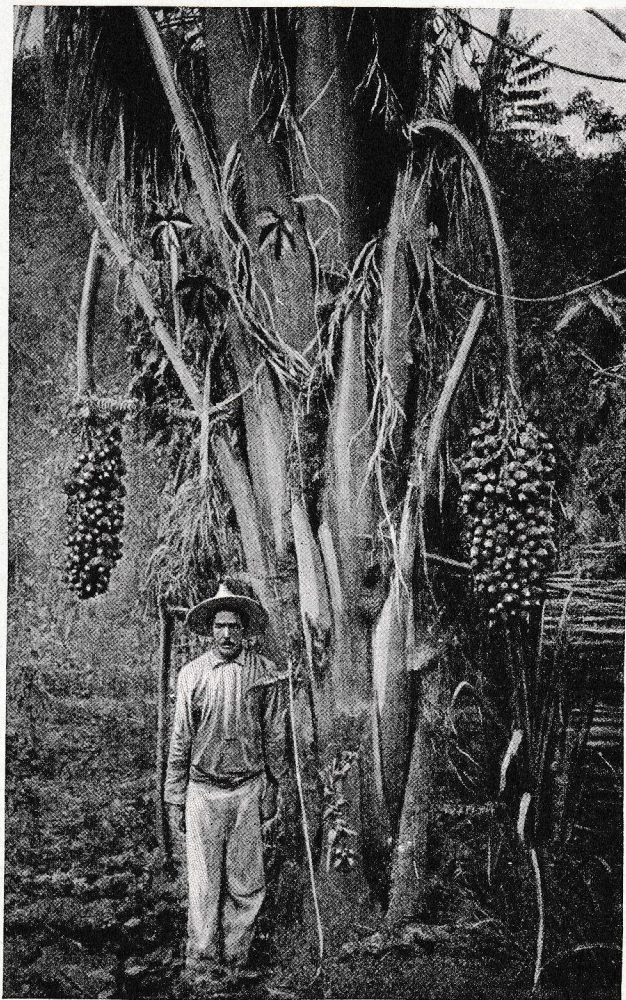
Photos, Publishers' Photo Service

COSTA RICA & ITS PEOPLE

major-generals, so gorgeous was their uniform and so overbearing their demeanour.

Ox-carts continued to be used, although the railway had come, and the carters continued their practice of travelling in caravans, a great many at a time. Like the mass of the Costa Ricans, they are an honest, courteous body of men, but nothing will make them hurry or move at all unless the whole procession is ready. The powerful oxen they drive come from the fine, grassy plains of the table-land, which might pasture millions of cattle. Of this possibility little advantage is taken, nor are the minerals in the soil of the Republic worked to any extent, though it is believed by some to be as rich in gold as the South African Rand. Silver and copper are known to exist also in rich deposits. The Spaniards, while they owned the country, did a good deal of mining, and there is no doubt that the industry will be revived some day. The principal crops, in addition to coffee and bananas, are maize, sugar-cane, rice, and potatoes; indeed, the nature of the soil and climate is such that almost everything might be grown on Costa Rican territory.

The natives are, it need scarcely be said, content with what they have grown for centuries and with the most primitive methods of cultivation. Nor are the Spanish families which form the aristocracy of the nation any more enterprising. The people of this class are, as a rule, well-educated in the conventional sense. They are clever at languages, they are superficially good talkers, they are fond of music. But nothing in the



GATHERING NUTS WHOLESALE

Cohune palm nuts grow in clusters nearly as large as a man, and yield oils that are expressed like coconut-oil. During the Great War their shells provided the best charcoal for use in gas masks

shape of progress is to be expected from their endeavours.

The manners of the Indians are also softened by a taste for music. The national instrument is the marimba, made on the same principle as the xylophone. Across a framework of bamboo three or four feet long are fixed bars of the same wood; underneath these are gourds strung on wire. The bars are struck with hammers and the gourds act as sounding-boards. A plaintive, sweet melody is thus produced; the people are passionately fond of it. They sing their pretty national airs to its



PLEASANT WORK IN PRETTY SETTING: PICKING COFFEE BERRIES

Most of the excellent Costa Rica coffee is grown on the plateau on which the capital stands, and the railway to the town passes through acres of coffee plantations. Many girls and women are employed in picking the berries, the preparation of which for export is an important occupation in San José. The coffee, like the banana, industry is largely in American and British hands

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service

accompaniment, they dance to it as well, and very graceful dancers are the younger women.

The women's feet are shapely and small; they mostly wear nothing on them, not even sandals. They dress in sleeveless blouses of white cotton and short skirts reaching only to the knee, with a coloured rebosa or scarf round the shoulders and over the head. This is a variation of the Spanish mantilla, and is worn among all classes. The features of the Indians are regular and might often be called refined. They are plainly of a higher race than the negroes from the West Indies, who are to be found in large numbers, especially in the hot swamps of the coast, where they thrive in an atmosphere like that of the African tropical marshes whence their ancestors came. They are cheerful, lazy, good-tempered generally, and thievish in their habits. They do not call theft stealing, however; they call it "taking."

There are several thousand pure Indians who live in the forests near the northern frontier, and about whom little is known. They are said by the few who have been among them to be quiet, inoffensive people, living in a state of absolute savagery. Yet there are indications that they do not by any means lack intelligence. Their habit of worshipping evil spirits because (they say) it is safer to be on good terms with them than with the good ones, may not be proof of a high spirituality, but it marks the possession of a certain amount of reasoning power.

Again, their method of stalking deer with oxen is exceedingly clever. From its youth up the ox that is destined for this occupation is trained by its owner. First its horns are loosened by blows and made sore about their roots; then cords are tied to them, and the animal is made to turn its head this way or that at the owner's will. The horns soon cease to

COSTA RICA & ITS PEOPLE

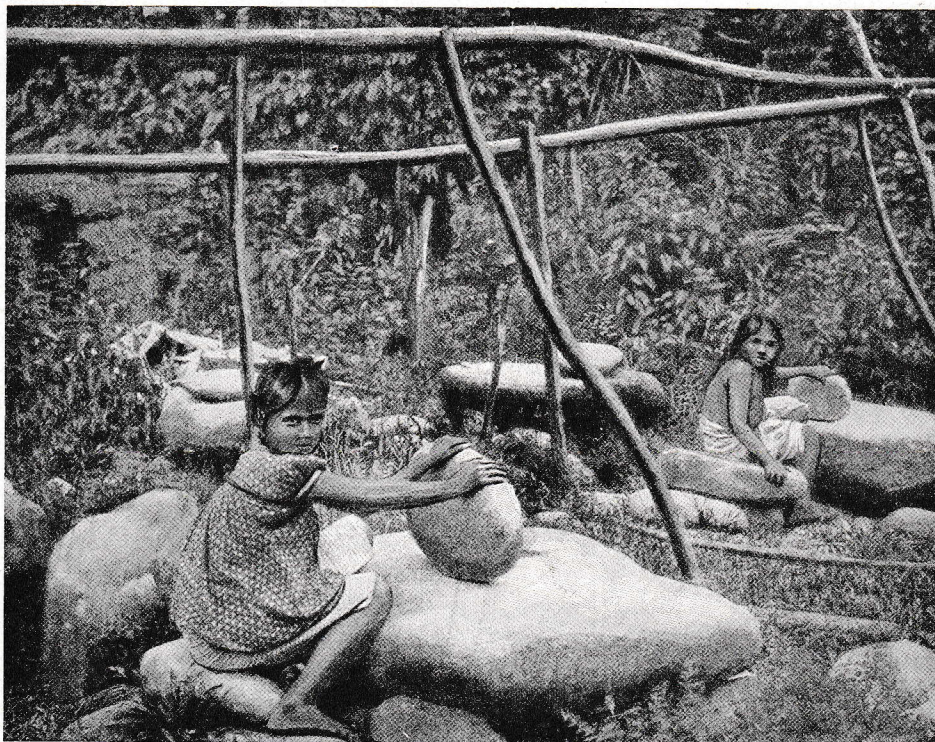
give trouble, but the habit of responding to the reins persists ; the slightest touch is enough to control the animal's movements.

Walking close to the ox and keeping hidden behind its shoulder the Indian hunter circles round the deer he has chosen. The deer sees only the ox and continues to browse without alarm. When he has got within about twenty yards of his quarry the hunter lets his arrow fly. Pierced by it, the deer is helpless. The arrow prevents it from moving easily ; it is soon taken and dispatched.

The Indians live principally on maize made into the flat, flabby cakes called tortillas and on the beans known as frijoles. An acre of forest land roughly cleared will produce enough food for a number of families ; each has in or around its dwelling (usually a mud or bamboo hut) a few fowls and wild

turkeys, a cow very likely, and a pony or mule. The men fish and trap rabbits, sometimes shoot a wild pig. They supply themselves with honey from their beehives and take the wax into the nearest town, where they get a good price for it, as the consumption of wax candles in the churches is so large.

The women do a great deal of washing ; they seem to spend a large part of their day by the river, chatting and laughing among themselves. Yet the male Indian never looks clean, unless you see him on a Sunday morning just after he has put on his fresh shirt and linen trousers. Both sexes smoke the perpetual cigarette ; both are fond of gold ear-rings. The men will do almost anything to get spirits ; the more fiery the liquor is the better it is liked. Drink is their curse here as elsewhere, and will be so while their education is such a sham.



TALAMANCA INDIAN GIRLS GRINDING GRAIN IN ANCIENT STYLE

Although they have within easy reach many conveniences and comforts of modern civilization the Talamancas prefer to live in the simple manner of their forebears, and steadfastly maintain their ancestral customs and speech. A quiet, inoffensive people, they dwell together in unruffled tribal fraternity in fixed abodes known as palenques, or stockaded encampments

Photo, H. N. Rudd

Costa Rica

II. The Story of Its Emancipation

By Percy F. Martin, F.R.G.S.

Author of "Through Five Republics of South America," etc.

COSTA RICA, which was among the earliest colonies established by Spain, about 1522, remains the one Central American republic of preponderantly white blood; descendants of its first settlers are especially proud of their Iberian origin. In the highlands may be seen what exists in hardly any other tropical country—white men on their farms bending over their hoes instead of watching the operations of native labour. Indian tribes proved so intractable under Spanish rule that they were almost eliminated, a fact which explains the large number of inhabitants of European blood. Fewer than 20,000 negroes and half-breeds are now to be found in the republic; they dwell, with some 3,000 uncivilized Indians, on the coast-lands. The whole population is estimated at 468,300.

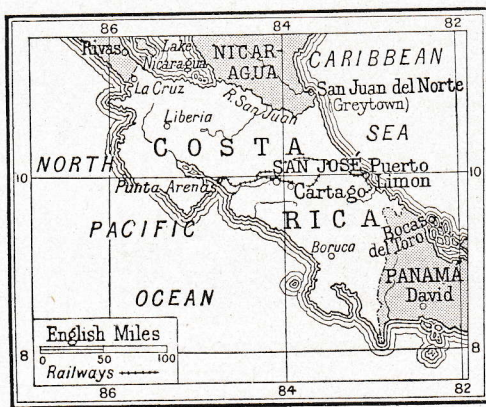
Created a separate province about 1540, Costa Rica henceforward had about sixty governors, and did not secure independence from Spain until 1821. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, between the rapacity of the Spaniards and the ravages of pirates, it sank into poverty and wretchedness, from which it did not rise until the discovery of gold in 1823, two years after it had secured emancipation from Spain.

On September 15, 1821, the country, with other weak Central American states, entered into a union with Mexico, then under the Emperor Iturbide, a dependence lasting for three years only. Later followed the experimental Republic of the United States of Central America, 1823-40, Costa Rica's part in which was not a very active one. Complete independence was not achieved until 1848. The constitution, modified several times since, was promulgated on December 7, 1871, but from about 1870 until 1882 the country was virtually under a dictatorship. Preceding 1910, the republic was

governed by some twenty-seven chief magistrates, among them men endowed with patriotism and intelligence, Costa Rican political history proving comparatively free from trouble such as afflicted its neighbours, an exception being the part played in the war against the filibuster General William Walker in 1856. Some trouble arose from time to time in connexion with frontier delimitation, notably with Colombia and Panamá, but these disputes were adjusted by arbitration, the trouble with Colombia being settled in favour of Costa Rica by the arbitration of the French President, Émile Loubet, in 1900, and that with Panamá in 1910, by the arbitration of the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. A Greater Republic of Central America was formed in 1895 by Honduras, Nicaragua, and Salvador, and dissolved in 1898, and Costa Rica for a time threw in her lot with this short-lived confederation. Between 1886 and 1910 every President served his full term. But in 1918 Señor Federico Tinoco Granados was deposed after serving but one year, and was succeeded by Señor Francisco Aguilar Barquero, who ruled for ten months, after which Señor Julio Acosta became President, assuming office for four years on May 8, 1920.

The superior administrative—and, as was believed, safer geographical—position of Costa Rica was recognized when, in 1907, it was decided to establish in that country a Central American Court of Justice and a Central American Pedagogical Institute.

The city of Cartago, established in 1523 at the base of the volcano Irazú, was selected. By the spring of 1910 a stately building, the gift of Andrew Carnegie, had been reared. Later, however, notwithstanding the declaration by its founders and architects that the construction was earthquake-proof, a disastrous eruption wrecked both the Palace of Peace



THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA

COSTA RICA : HISTORICAL

and a large part of the city. To-day, Cartago presents the appearance of a modern Pompeii. For administrative purposes the republic is divided into the seven provinces of San José, containing the capital of the same name, Alajuela, Heredia, Cartago, Guanacaste, Punta Arenas, and Limón. The state religion is Roman Catholic, the chief ecclesiastic, the Bishop of San José, being under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Guatemala.

The government of Costa Rica has always been more or less an oligarchy. For generations the rule has been vested in some forty old Spanish families, closely intermarried. These well-to-do people claim the right of selecting the president. Political parties are conservative and liberal, the latter having been mostly in power of recent years. Congress has its old-fashioned members, its scholarly orators, proud of their Castilian pronunciation; its rising young lawyers, seeking forensic reputation at any cost; and its communistic members, largely engaged in denunciation of foreigners, especially North Americans. Their dislike of aliens, however, has not extended to reluctance to borrowing their money; foreign capitalists have liberally financed Costa Rican economic enterprises, as well as their not-infrequent boundary wars with neighbours. The latest has been with Panamá over the possession of certain rich lands in over Coto, Chiriquí.

In the spring of 1921, oil and other

government concessions granted to British firms were repudiated, like others given to Lords Cowdray and Murray in 1913. Coffee-raising and fruit-growing are the main industries, the systematic cultivation of bananas having increased remarkably. Costa Rica is now recognised as the leading exporter of this fruit. Until 1915, cattle were not exported; to-day, they form a thriving industry which has met with the active support of the Government.

Transportation is largely in the hands of United States interests, the only British line (the Costa Rica Railway) having been handed over to Americans to operate upon an interest basis. Leased since 1905, at varying rentals, under a concession which will not expire until 1990, the return to British shareholders is small. The republic contains some 500 miles of track of 3½ ft. gauge. The main systems are the Northern Railway, Port Limón to San José (the capital), 103 miles, and San José to Alajuela, 14 miles; the Pacific Railway, Punta Arenas to San José, 69 miles. Considerable water transportation is conducted on the San Juan river, connecting with Lake Nicaragua, and between Punta Arenas and other local ports on the Gulf of Nicoya. Steamship connexions with most parts of the world are numerous and generally good, the completion of the Panamá waterway having had a profound influence upon this Central American state; new ports are being created to serve the enlarged traffic brought by the canal.

COSTA RICA : FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Southern state of Central America, between Nicaragua and Panamá. Area about 23,000 square miles, divided into seven provinces: San José, Alajuela, Heredia, Cartago, Guanacaste, Punta Arenas, and Limón. Population 468,300. Europeans, many of pure Spanish blood, mainly in and around San José and other towns. About 18,000 British West Indians on the banana farms in Limón; there are some 3,000 aboriginal Indians on the coast lands. Interior traversed by two mountain ranges; highest peaks of Talamanca range over 12,700 ft. Earthquakes frequent. Caribbean coast generally low, with one inlet, Port Limón; Pacific coast elevated, with two large gulfs, Nicoya and Dulce. Chief river the San Juan. Language, Spanish.

Government and Constitution

Republic with President with Cabinet of four, and Constitutional Congress of forty-three deputies elected for four years. Universal suffrage for all males of age and self-supporting.

Defence

Army includes reserve and national guard of 52,000, active army 38,950; every male between ages of eighteen and fifty liable to serve in militia.

Communications

Railway mileage about 500, being extended. Telegraph lines 1,840 miles, telephones about 1,390

miles. Several wireless installations. Government station at Colorado.

Commerce and Industries

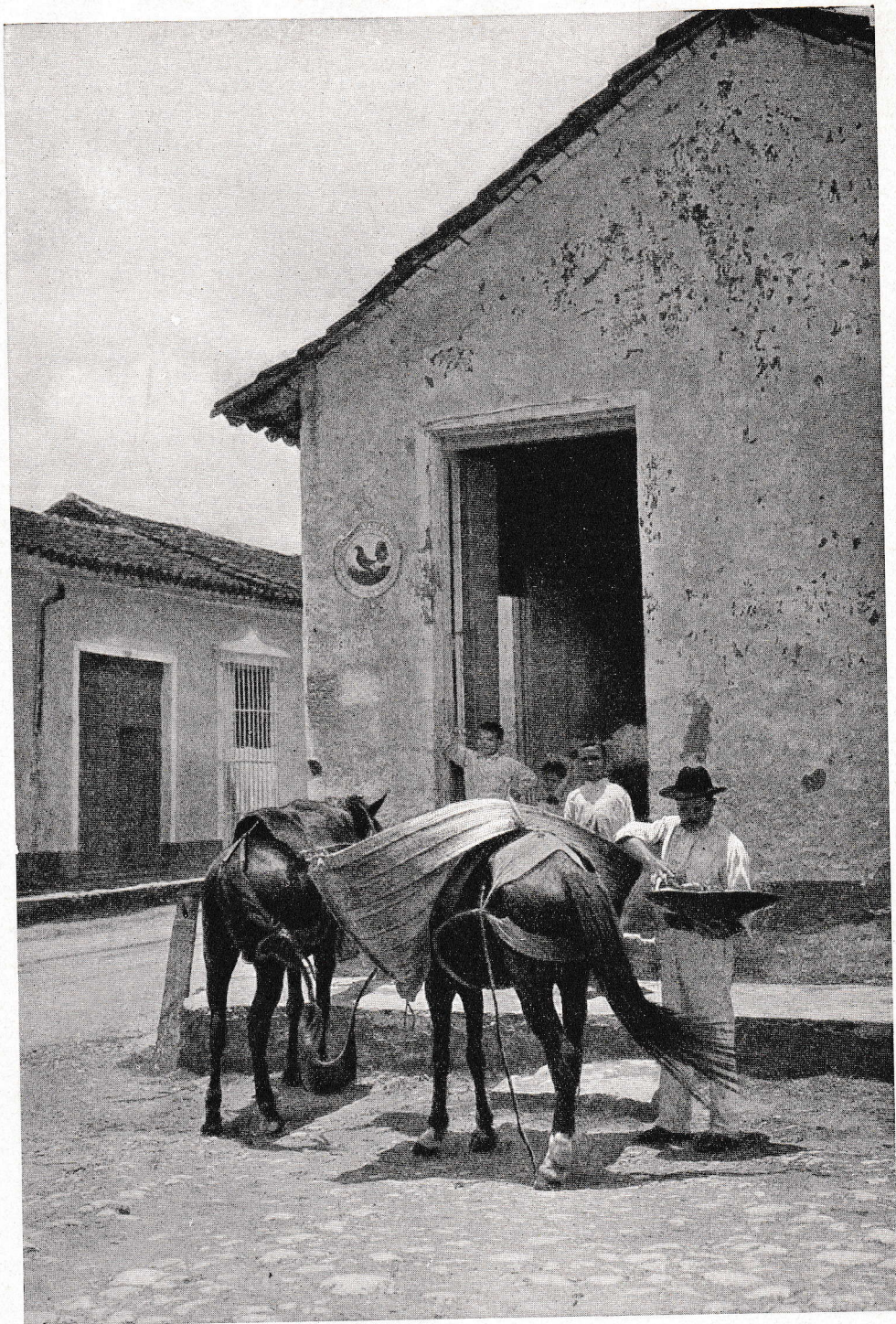
Chief products coffee and bananas. Gold and silver mining on Pacific slope. Bee-keeping is carried on, and maize, sugar cane, rice, potatoes, and tobacco are cultivated. Live-stock in 1915 included 347,475 cattle, 64,700 horses, 76,200 pigs, in addition to mules, sheep, and goats. Total exports 1920 valued at £2,563,929 (coffee £917,420, bananas £827,988, sugar £271,660, gold, silver, etc., £200,754, cacao £96,352); imports £3,645,873 (cotton goods, cattle, coffee bags, drugs, flour, etc.). Chief trade with United States and United Kingdom. Monetary unit, the colon, equals 22.9d. Metric system in use.

Religion and Education

State religion Roman Catholic; other religions tolerated. Elementary education free and compulsory. In 1920 there were 411 elementary schools, 1,348 teachers, and 32,840 pupils. Colleges at Cartago, Alajuela, and Heredia; lyceum for boys and girls' college at San José; normal school at Heredia. Study of medicine, law, pharmacy, and dentistry provided for.

Chief Towns

San José, capital (population 38,930, with suburbs, 51,390), Alajuela (11,900), Cartago (17,400), Heredia (13,880), Limón (10,230), Punta Arenas (5,100).



HOUSE TO HOUSE DELIVERY OF VEGETABLES BY PACK-HORSEMEN

Horses were introduced into Cuba by the Spaniards, and the animals now bred in all parts of the island are descendants of the old Andalusian stock. The characteristic Cuban horse is a stout pony with the build of a cob, and a peculiar prancing gait which makes it an easy riding animal. For purposes of retail trade in the towns, the pack-horses carry very large panniers

Photo, A. W. Culler

Cuba

I. Life in "The Pearl of The Antilles"

By Richard Curle

Author of "Wanderings : A Book of Travel and Reminiscence "

WHEN Columbus discovered Cuba in October, 1492, it was inhabited, apparently, by one of the mildest races of people the world has ever known ; an innocent, happy, indolent race who lived on fish and fruit and sweet potatoes, and who smoked tobacco. In the shade of royal palms—Cuba's most famous tree—they idled away life in a state of idyllic contentment. Columbus was immensely impressed by Cuba and her islanders, but in his subsequent journeys to the West, save for one brief landing in 1502, he was never able to revisit it, and the inhabitants fell rapidly under the sway of his fanatic and mercenary followers. They were impressed into the mines and into field labour, and though they were declared emancipated in 1544, yet by then most of them had already died out. Now, as a separate race, they are merely a memory, though it is not unreasonable to suppose that their blood is mingled in some of the oldest Cuban families.

Cultured, Sensitive Gentlemen

Indeed, whether it be owing to the climate or to inherited traits, there is much in the character of the average Cuban of to-day that reminds one of the recorded character of the aboriginal inhabitants. Politically he may have the impulsive lack of solidity of the South American, but as a private individual he is remarkable above all for his perfect manners, his genuine hospitality, his embarrassing generosity, and his love of children. To the Cuban of the present, as to his forerunners, life is not a matter to be taken too seriously. He wants to be at ease, and he wants to make others at ease, and the rush of modern existence is alien to his philosophic scheme. Economic pressure forces him to work, but he loves to turn

from work to the things that give zest to life—to politics, to love-making, and to play.

The psychology of Cubans is volatile. Gentle by nature, they are also excitable, and readily show resentment. They are sensitive to criticism and like to be praised. They are fond of music—especially the opera—flowers, bright colours, and pets, such as caged birds. Cubans of the better class do not overtax their energies in business. Many men in the towns devote but a few hours daily to the task of making money, but, on the other hand, they will practise fencing tirelessly and ride with the greatest gusto.

Pleasant Life in the Towns

As for the women, theirs is a rather cloistered existence. They do not go out much in the streets, save in the late afternoon. A young girl, of course, must never appear alone in public. She sits at home, her face white with powder, working at embroidery, and dreaming, maybe, of her lover's evening visit ; for courtship is a highly formal proceeding among the more distinguished families. Once a girl is engaged she abandons social functions, and as the engagement is likely to last anything from one to six years, it must be rather a trying time. With the utmost regularity the young man calls upon her every evening ; but, alas ! he may only see her in the presence of a third person. Spanish etiquette in such matters is rigidly enforced.

The custom in the towns is to rise early, have a light breakfast (*desayuno*), and partake of lunch (*almuerzo*) about eleven. Then you will lie down for a siesta till two or three, and then go shopping, etc. From five until nightfall is a favourite time for transacting business, and then about seven comes

CUBA & THE CUBANS

dinner (comida). The visitor—unless he feeds only at some Europeanised hotel—will soon discover two things ; first, that the bread is invariably most delicious ; second, that a copious use of garlic in cooking does not add to the pleasures of an ordinary palate. After dinner the serious work of the day begins. You meet your friends, you drive in the parks, you go to the opera, you dance, and you sip drinks and swap gossip in cafés.

Havana, like Madrid, is at its liveliest from nine p.m. till three a.m. One might almost suppose that the order of nature had been reversed, and that man had developed into a nocturnal animal.

The poorer classes, which in the influx of foreigners during the last half century are less purely Cuban throughout than the richer members of society, have their own particular customs and pleasures. Cock-fighting, with all the lore that has sprung up around this ancient pastime, is a matter of engrossing interest to many a humble

sportsman, and favourite cocks have their serious and passionate backers. Bull-fighting, also, used to be very popular. The women, like their sisters of the upper class, are very religious, and though there is no State religion under the Republic, yet Roman Catholicism is almost universal, and has a genuine sway in public sentiment.

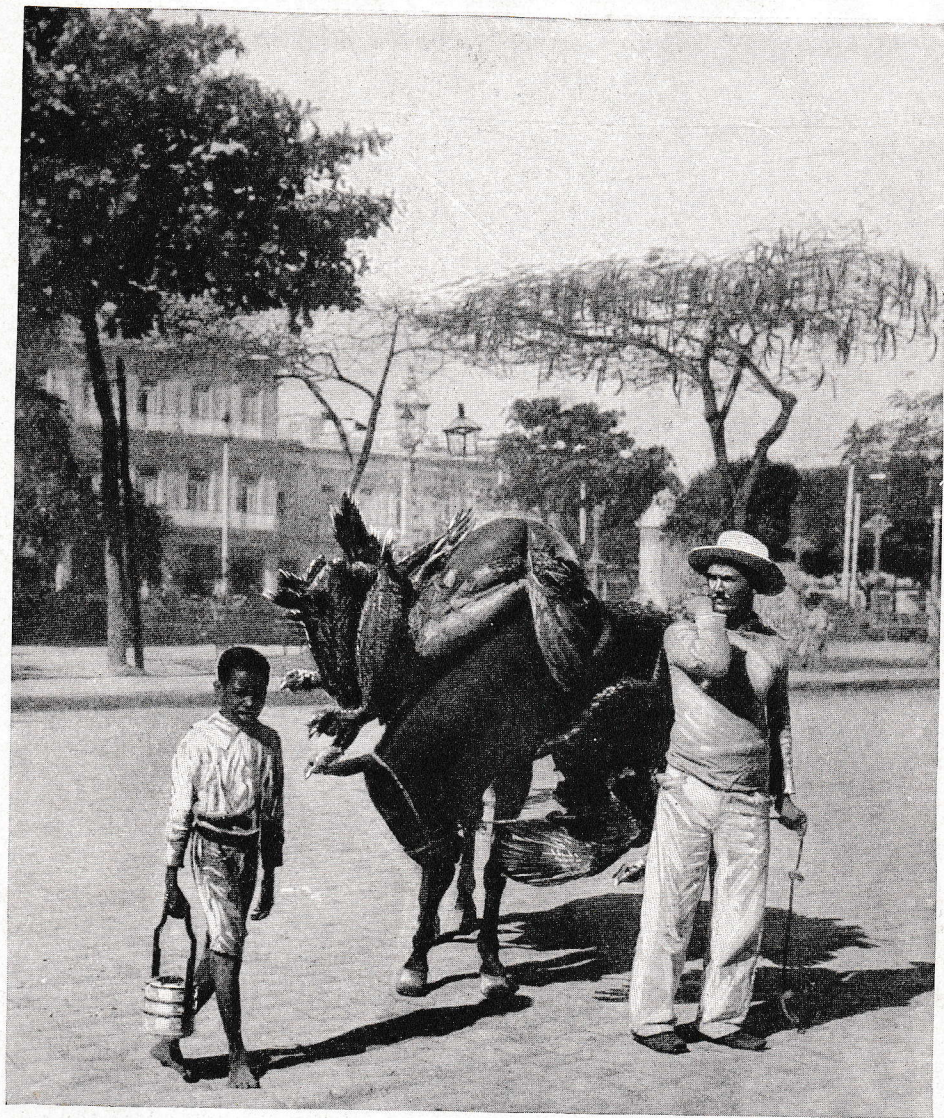
The State lottery is one of the chief excitements in the life of the populace. The tickets are hawked everywhere, and everybody invests. The mere hope of making a fortune by a small outlay adds a touch of colour to many a drab existence, and as hope is the most indestructible of all things, constant disappointment only adds fuel to the fire. Cubans love a gamble ; indeed, it would be true to say that they love anything that will lift their imaginations above the routine of their daily tasks. They get readily carried away, but this is not because they are lacking in sense, but because they are of southern origin, and because they positively like being



PATIENT OBEDIENCE WAITING UNCONSTRAINED

Cuban horses stand without hitching, and a number of them waiting for their masters, like these outside the Commercial General Store, are a common sight in any Cuban town. Minor evidence of the Cuban's humane regard for his horse is furnished by the undocked tails of these patient creatures

Photo, A. W. Culler



LIVE TURKEYS FOR SALE IN THE STREETS OF HAVANA

Meat and poultry will not remain in good condition for long in a hot climate. The Cubans obviate the chance of their table poultry going bad by buying it before it is killed. This merchant goes from door to door with his turkeys fastened on to his horse. The customer selects a bird to his choice and the vendor kills it for him

Photo, Underwood Press Service

carried away. As once they threw their heart into the contest with Spain, so now do they throw their heart into other contests of much less urgency; in fact, one might sometimes surmise, of no urgency whatsoever.

While the original stock of the Cuban race was recruited mainly from the Iberian peninsula, there is also a good deal of old French blood in the country, arising from traders and privateers of

the seventeenth century and from the settlers forced to flee thither from San Domingo about the time of the Revolution. This mingling of French strains with the original Spanish has produced a nation quite individual as a whole, though Latin in its main characteristics. The sense of nationality and patriotism is as powerfully felt in Cuba as in the South American Republics. By the end of the sixteenth



SMILES AND CONTENTMENT THE ORDER OF THE DAY

Cubans are a pleasant, care-free folk, whose aim in life is to be as comfortable as possible while making others comfortable also. This peasant family grouped by the door of their hut typify the national bonhomie to the full. The long machete carried by the youth on the right is used for cutting down hedges and making clearings

Photo, A. W. Cutler



RIBBONS FOR TRESSES AND LACE FOR DRESSES

Through the streets of Havana goes the pedlar with his store of materials and laces. The box on the pavement at his side contains buttons, needles, cottons, and all the odds and ends of the drapery business. The cloths and laces he carries in a box on his shoulder. To the bottom of the box is fixed a long pole, which serves as prop when he is standing still

Photo, A. W. Cutler

CUBA & THE CUBANS

century Cubans had already begun to regard themselves as Cubans rather than as Spaniards, and from 1820 until 1895, when the War of Independence against Spain broke out, there was endless political unrest punctuated by one abortive revolution in 1869.

Negroes began to be imported from West Africa as slaves as early as 1520, and the practice was not legally abolished until 1820. Slavery was not fully abolished by law until 1886, and, in practice, it lingered on still later. Like the southern United States, Cuba was influenced in this direction by its

labour problems. Of a total population of about 2,889,000, some 29 per cent. are negroes and people of mixed descent, figures comparing with 1,000,000 in 1841, of whom the majority were negroes.

The Cuban negro is an inconsequent, humorous sort of fellow, very excitable, very superstitious, and given at times to dark ancestral dreams. If he must work he prefers to work in the fields on tobacco, sugar, or banana plantations, but he would rather work as little as possible and loiter outside his tiny shack (*bohío*) enjoying the sun, surrounded by his ragged and shouting family. Politically and socially there is great tolerance in the country, the colour bar is not so serious as it is in many of the islands, and there is political equality. But there is much poverty among the negroes, little mental stability, and, on the whole, little ambition to rise above their lot. In their own way they are happy and contented.

Cuba is the largest of the West Indies, and it is divided into six provinces—Havana, Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, Santa Clara, Camagüey, and Oriente. The eastern third of Oriente is mountainous; the greater part of Camagüey is made up of gently rolling plains with occasional hills rising to 1,500 feet; the greater part of Santa Clara is mountainous; the western part of this province, together with all Matanzas and Havana, is plain, broken here and there by low hills of a few hundred feet; the northern half of Pinar del Rio is traversed by ranges of hills and the southern half is a flat plain, into which project the foothills of the main ranges. None of the many



LIFE'S STAFF AND ONE OF ITS SPICES

To the Cuban, as to everybody else, bread is indispensable. Gambling in some form is hardly less so. This baker's man, with his delicious rolls, at the national lottery office door symbolises gratification of two national appetites

Photo, A. W. Culler



POULTERERS' MEN DELIVERING LIVE-STOCK AT TACÓN MARKET

Large markets are notable features of Havana, where the bulk of the wholesale trade of the western half of the island is carried on. Among the chief of these is the market of Tacón, where a consignment of live poultry from the outlying districts is being delivered. Poultry flourishes everywhere in Cuba and abundant supplies are to be found in all markets

Photo, A. W. Cuñer



FOCUS OF HUMAN INTEREST IN THE EARLY MORNING

Activity hums over the Plaza del Vapor, the great arcaded building where the daily food supplies of Havana are marketed. Outside the market the streets are crowded with pack animals and covered wagons that have brought in supplies from the country, and with the horses of traders who have come to buy poultry or sugar-cane which presently they will sell retail on horseback

Photo. Underwood Press Service

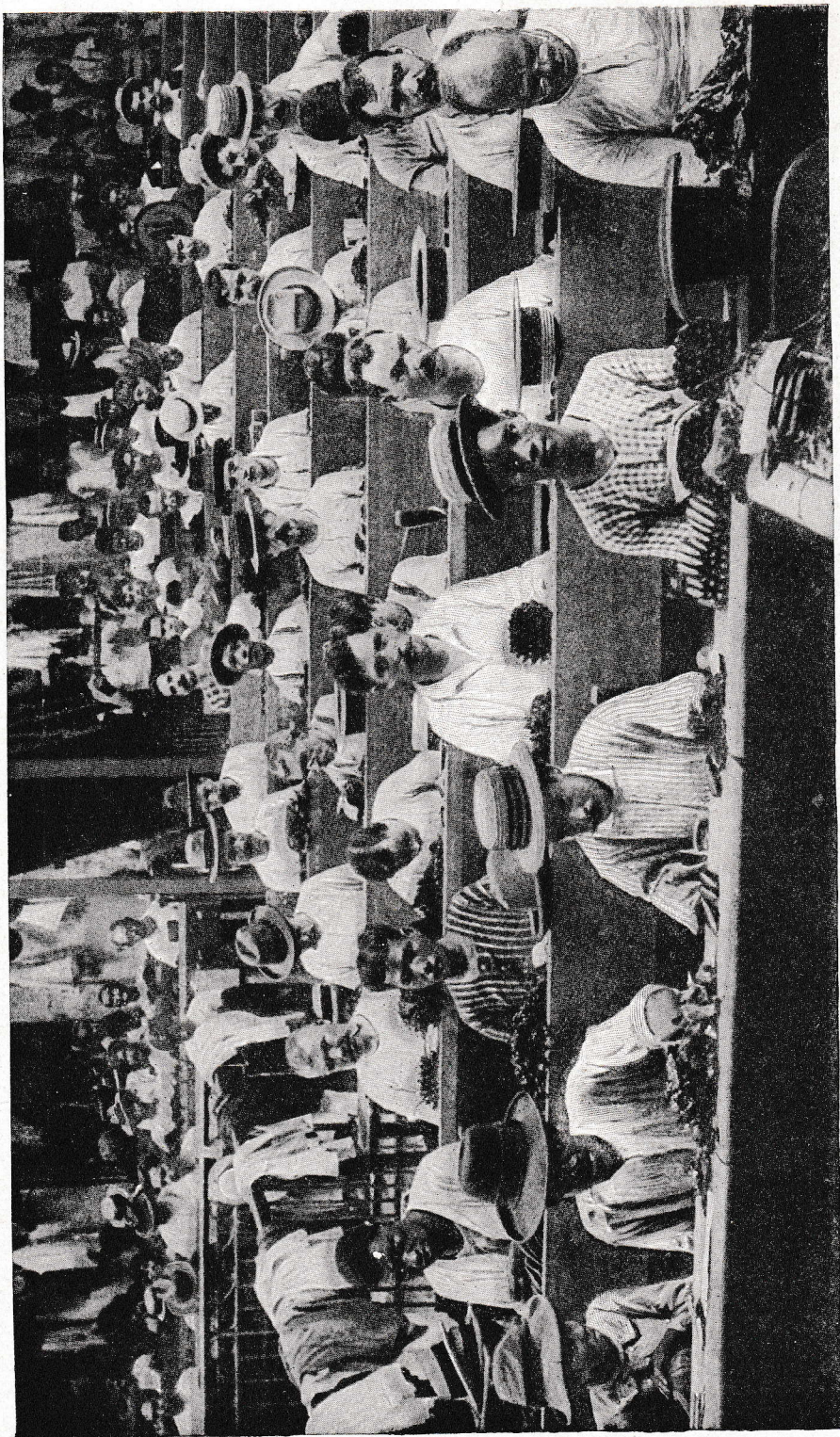


TENDING YOUNG PLANTS IN A TOBACCO PLANTATION

Tobacco plants are grown from seed sown in nursery-beds and planted out on ridges about three feet apart. While maturing the plants are kept free from weeds and "topped" to prevent seed formation, only a certain number of leaves being left on each plant, according to the kind of tobacco desired.

For the best quality tobaccos the leaves are picked singly as they ripen

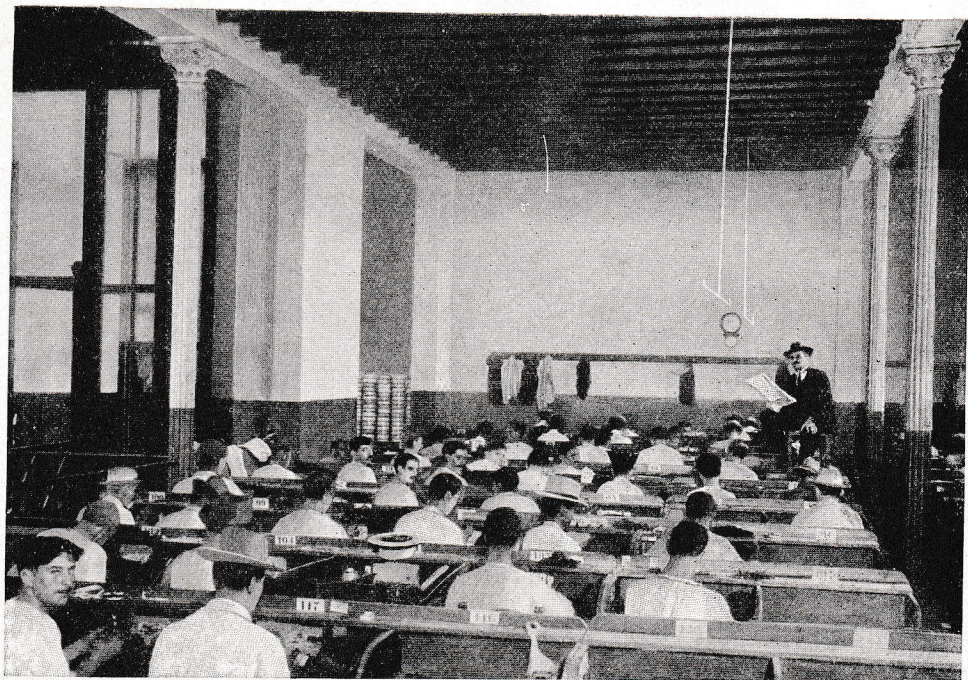
Photo, Underwood Press Service



CLEVER HANDS IN A HAVANA FACTORY ROLLING CIGARS FOR WEALTHY CONNOISSEURS

Great skill is required in the manufacture of "legittimas," the genuine Havana cigars made only in Cuba. The finest material is selected, and the operator rolls together enough to form the filling of one cigar. He wraps this in an inner cover of leaf prepared of the length desired, rolls it into proper shape and consistency, and then enfolds it in the outer wrapper of a single leaf, which he winds spirally from the thick to the pointed end and finishes with a twist

Photo, Underwood Press Service



MONOTONY OF LABOUR RELIEVED BY THE PROFESSIONAL READER

Most of the tobacco factories in Havana employ a reader who entertains the hands while at work by reading to them the news of the day or selections from the national classics. The workpeople themselves choose this official by vote, and each contributes ten cents a week towards his payment

Photo, Henry Clay & Bock & Co., Ltd.



WORKERS AT THE DRYING-SHEDS HANGING UP THE LEAVES

Primed leaves, gathered separately, are carried at once to the drying-shed where they are strung on wire or string and hung up on laths. Plants cut whole, when the middle leaves are about ripe, are spitted on laths and left in the field to wilt before being hung up in the ventilating barn

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service



DARKIES WHO HOLD THAT "THE SLEEP OF A LABOURING MAN IS SWEET"

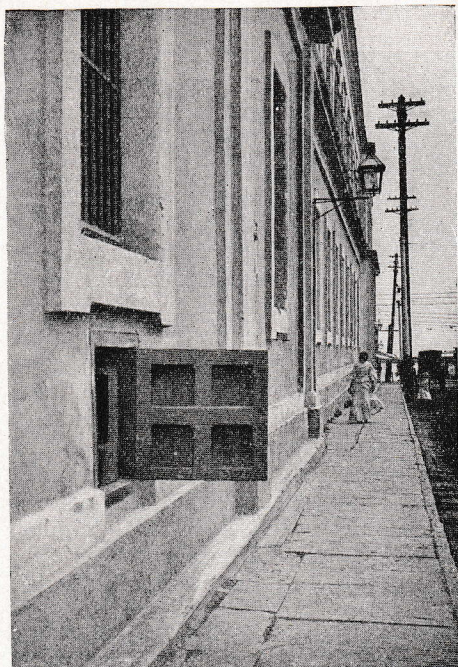
Although the negroes in Cuba are not fond of work many of them find light employment in the tobacco and sugar-fields. Humorous, care-free, and exceedingly superstitious, they were first imported from Africa in 1520. Lacking in ambition and initiative, they enjoy great social and political tolerance



LAUGHTER HOLDING BOTH HIS SIDES IN FACE OF HIGH ADVENTURE

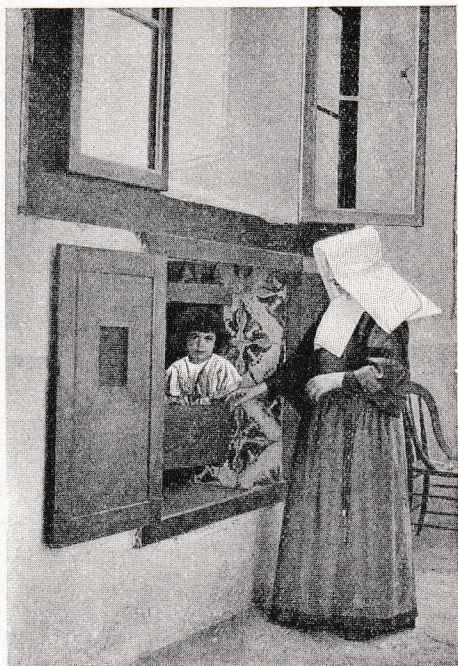
Childhood's ingenuous enjoyment of the unexpected is amusingly displayed by these Cuban children on suddenly finding greatness thrust upon them by the photographer's flattering attention. To the small boy the adventure appeals as a huge joke, the only repartee to which is uncontrolled hilarity

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service



AN EVER OPEN DOOR

To this hatch in the wall of the orphanage unwanted children, usually illegitimate, may be brought by their mothers under cover of night. The turning stile rings a bell inside



BROUGHT TO A QUIET HAVEN

No child thus brought to the orphanage is turned away. Carefully tended, they are taught some industry whereby they may earn a living on leaving the home at twenty-three



WHERE THE SUMMER CALM OF CHARITY PERPETUALLY REIGNS

Notable among the many charitable and benevolent institutions of Havana is the Casa de Beneficencia, founded by Las Casas and opened in 1794. It comprises an orphanage, maternity ward, infirmary, lunatic asylum, and home for vagrants. In the long nursery ward the babies, watched over by a motherly sister, are laid on matting on the floor to rest and stretch their limbs

Photos, A. W. Cuiller

CUBA & THE CUBANS



CUBAN PEDLAR ARMED WITH A NOVEL BOUQUET

At first sight it may seem that the man crossing this sunlit square is carrying a gargantuan bunch of flowers, prize chrysanthemums, or perhaps more prosaic cauliflowers. In fact, he is a sponge seller, laden with a stock of his wares

Photo, A. W. Cutler

rivers is of any significance save the Cauto in Oriente. The country is beautiful in the perpetual green of its vegetation, and its climate—which, next to Australia, is said to be the healthiest in the world—is equable, ranging from an average of 71 degrees in January to 82 degrees in July.

Half of the island is still covered by primeval forests—a fact but little realized—and these forests are rich in

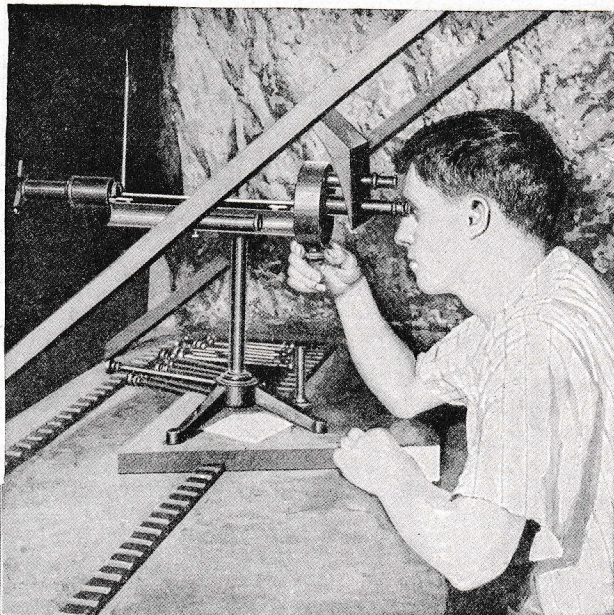
such trees as mahogany, cedar, sandal-wood, lignum-vitæ, and logwood. The flora is magnificent, and though some 3,500 species of plants have been described, it is probable that many more remain unclassified. In that tropical humidity they flourish in unending sequence. Birds, too, abound in wonderful profusion, and Cuba can boast of 200 different varieties indigenous to the island. Other things abound that are not so pleasant, as, for example, scorpions, centipedes, tarantulas, cockroaches, mosquitoes, fleas, ticks, and all manner of insects. They add to the interest of life—especially in the country districts—without adding to its amenity. Fortunately, the snakes are all non-poisonous; unfortunately, the mammals are few and of small size.

Cuba is essentially an agricultural country. Her chief crops are sugar and tobacco, with coffee as a bad third. The provinces of Santa Clara and Matanzas are the chief sugar-producing centres, while tobacco is mainly cultivated in Pinar del Rio and Havana. A sugar plantation where sugar is only grown and not manufactured is called a colonia; where it is grown and

manufactured, an ingenio; and where it is grown and manufactured on a large scale, with all the accessories of machine-shops and so on, a central. A tobacco plantation is known as a vega, and a coffee plantation as a cafetal. Cuba also produces many other tropical crops, such as grains, bananas, and henequen (or sisal hemp), from which the binding twine for reapers is made. The

CUBA & THE CUBANS

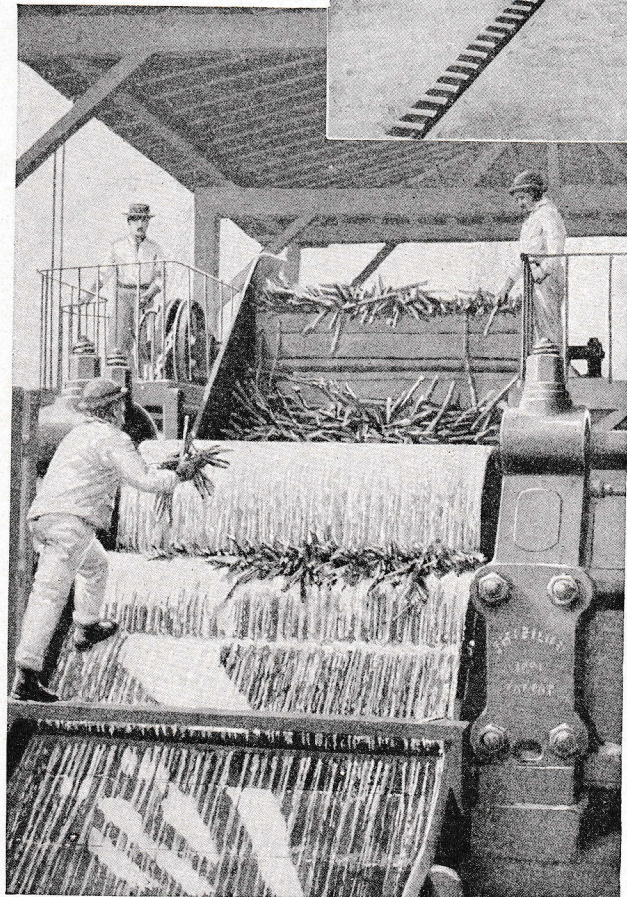
richest Cuban soil is the black soil, used for sugar; the second richest is the red soil, used for coffee; and the third richest is the mulatto-coloured soil, used for tobacco. The tobacco farms are usually situated along the banks of rivers, and the soil needs constant fertilising. Tobacco seed is grown in nurseries, out of which the young plants are taken in October and November and planted out in furrows two feet apart. They grow



SCIENCE AND SUGAR

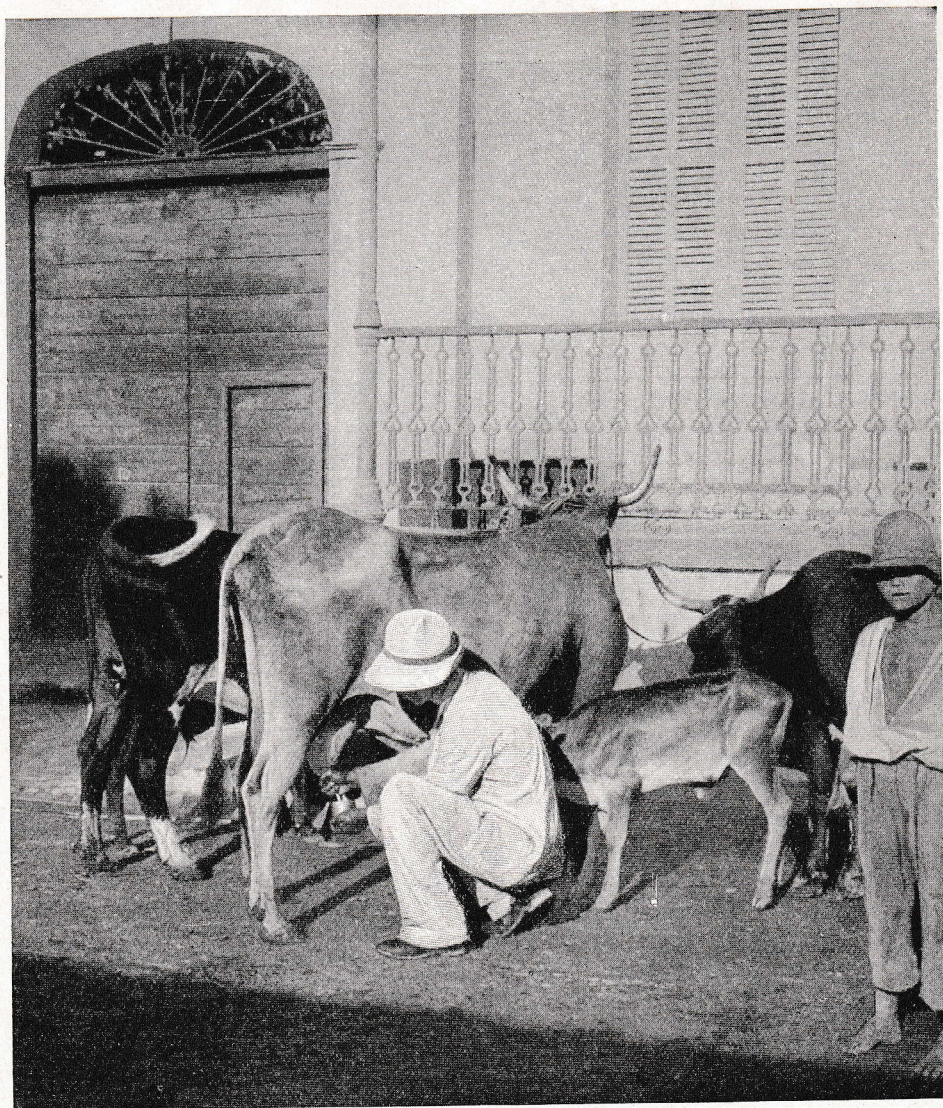
Sugar solutions are tested by polarised light. The greater the deflection of the light rays the stronger the solution

very rapidly, and attain their full size of six feet and over in a few months, during which time a constant war has to be waged against the insects that attack them. When the large leaves have grown to a good size—there are usually ten of them—the small surrounding leaves are picked off, as is the top of the plant, so that all the strength may go into the main leaves. Some of the finest tobacco is grown under cloth awnings, raised some eight feet above the ground, which act as a sort of filter to the sun's rays, and greatly increase the yield. When the selected leaves are finally picked, they are strung across poles in thatched drying-houses. After two or three months there they dry and turn



REDUCING SUGAR CANE TO JUICE

Broken into short pieces, the canes are reduced to a shredded condition and then crushed in a series of mills having three horizontal rollers each. Water, or dilute juice, is sprayed on the fibre between the successive crushings



NO POSSIBLE DOUBT ABOUT THE FRESHNESS OF THE MILK

In Cuban towns the milk is quite commonly brought to the doors by the cows themselves, the supply for each customer being drawn from them in front of his house. The custom, which has much to recommend it on many grounds, is paralleled in Malta, where goats' milk is supplied in the same way

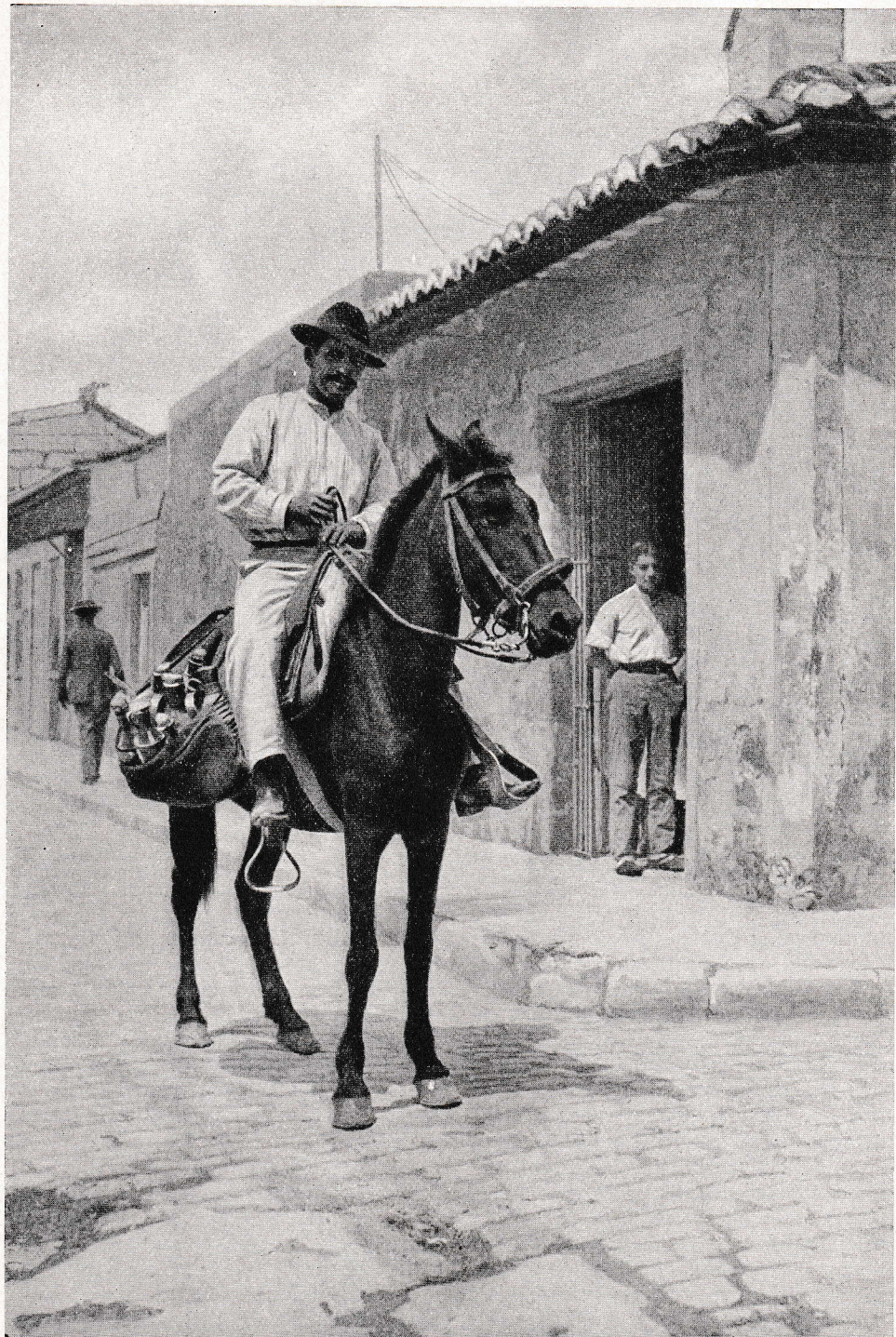
Photo, Underwood Press Service

yellow and they are then packed into bales weighing about a hundred pounds and are sent off to Havana.

On some sugar estates—sugar, unlike tobacco, does not exhaust the soil—the same land has yielded crops for a hundred years in succession. Cattle in considerable numbers wander over the plains of guinea grass. Vast areas await opening up, and agriculture is capable of tremendous and profitable expansion. As more railways are

constructed so will the land come under further cultivation.

The fluctuating prices of sugar and tobacco make Cuba a country of fluctuating prosperity. During the Great War she was marvellously prosperous, but perhaps no country felt more acutely the post-war slump. Her wealth depends on the state of world markets, and she must build up greater reserves before she can stabilise more permanently her financial basis. The rich



DELIVERING THE MILK ON HORSEBACK IN HAVANA

Other Cuban milkmen go their morning rounds on horseback. Large panniers or saddlebags fastened on either side of the horse are used for carrying the milk, which is contained in small sealed tins. The rider is obliged to go at a slow pace, for were he to trot his horse his customers would receive not milk but butter, as did the Beduins from the skinfuls of milk illustrated on page 181

Photo, A. W. Cutler



SMALL SERVANTS AT A SHRINE OF POMONA

Fruit abounds in Cuba and fills the markets with colour and appetising scents. A kiosk like this, with pineapples piled high, is a particularly beautiful object, the tawny golden rind and grey-green leaves set off by encircling rows of apples—ruddy grey sapotes or purple caimitos—and flanked below by huge clumps of green, or yellow bananas

estate-owning Cubans live in handsome houses and, even for the townsman, existence can be very comfortable on a plantation. But it must be confessed that the Cuban ladies do not find that lolling in cane chairs on a veranda compensates them for the delights of town life, and they are quite prepared to leave their menfolk on the estates if only they may hasten back to Havana. But for the poorer countrymen, the *monteros*, things are not so pleasant, though they, too, generally manage to employ some negro labour. Their food is coffee, pork, and plantains, and they know how to work hard. The women weave a little cotton and make *cascarilla*, a favourite cosmetic, out of egg-shells. This class is often illiterate, invariably hyper-superstitious, but, like all other Cubans, boundless in its hospitality.

The mineral resources of Cuba yet remain to be thoroughly investigated. That she produces iron ore, marble, and asphalt in abundance is a proved fact, but whether the mountainous region of Oriente is as rich in gold and other precious metals as some suppose, awaits further prospecting. The asphalt seems to point to oil.

Most visitors do not get beyond Havana (*La Habana*) and its outskirts, but to know Havana is no more to know Cuba than to know Paris is to know France. Nevertheless, it is a fascinating town, by far the largest and most important in the island, and it has been the capital since 1559. Havana is the port through which most of Cuba's produce passes to America and Europe, and it is also the centre of the cigar-making industry. There are probably

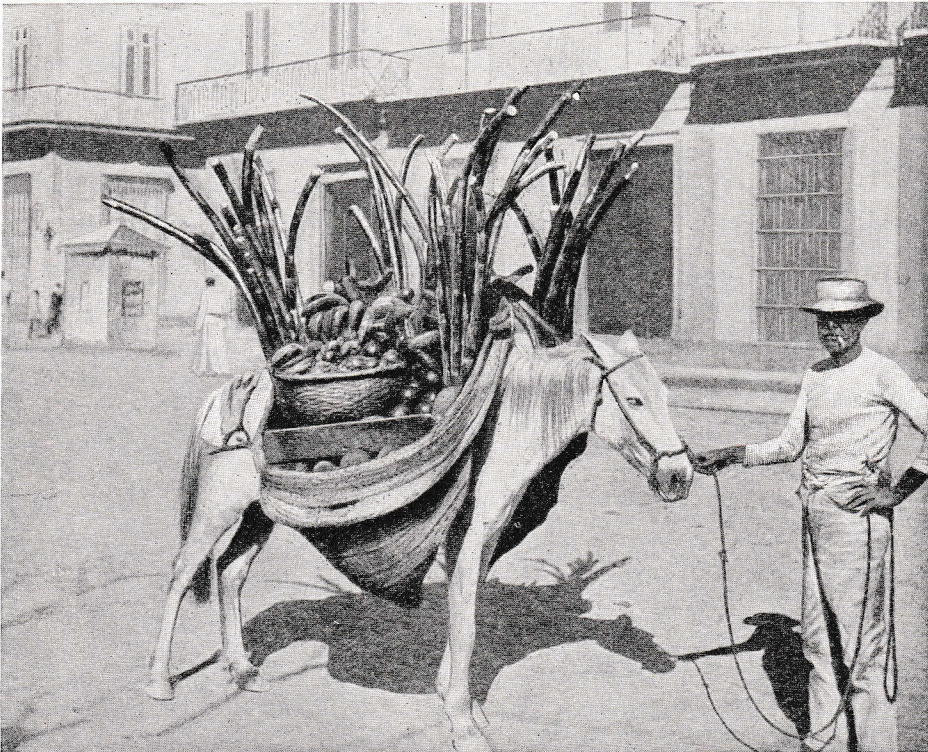
CUBA & THE CUBANS

150 large cigar factories there, some employing 400 men and even doing their own label printing and making their own boxes, and it is of absorbing interest to watch the various processes through which the raw leaf passes in its progress towards the finished Corona. The skilled workmen are well paid, and as each is usually allowed to make daily for himself five to ten cigars, the life has its compensations.

A curious and very old custom of the cigar factories throws quite a sidelight upon Cuban psychology. Every factory employs its own reader, who, during two daily sessions of an hour and a half, reads aloud to the staff while they roll cigars. The reader is selected by competition in which the workmen vote, and the books to be read—which, apart from the newspapers, consist in the main of classical works in Spanish literature and

books of travel—are chosen by a committee. The reader sits on a high chair where all may see him and his trained voice carries over his audience. Each member of the staff pays him ten cents a week, and the post is both coveted and profitable.

Approached from the sea, Havana presents an appearance of ethereal loveliness, with her bright colours blending about the green trees and the blue ocean, and the spell is not diminished as one walks through its narrow, teeming, old-world Spanish streets, those streets of a medieval city planked down in the incongruous turmoil of the twentieth century, and observes at leisure the immense variety of its picturesque existence. The motors and the mules, the innumerable itinerant hawkers, the houses with their barred windows and little patios behind gay with flowers



PROSPEROUS PROPRIETOR OF A "ONE-HORSE" CONCERN

The unwieldy panniers weighing down this little horse are filled with the fruit of the country. The long stems stretching up at all angles are sugar-canes, which contain a large amount of saccharine. This fruit-merchant's stock comprises avocado pears, sapodillas—an insipidly sweet plum-like fruit—mangoes, bananas, and plantains. Plantains are commonly eaten fried



UNDER A SPREADING CEIBA TREE THE CUBAN HOMESTEAD STANDS

Little better than the outhouses of an English peasant proprietor, palm-thatched shanties like these are the homes of many Cuban peasants. The barrel covered hut contains the drinking water of the family now gathered at the foot of a spreading ceiba tree. These trees bear bell-shaped flowers, followed by pods filled with cotton-invested seeds which yield the useful fibre called kapok

Photo A. W. Cutler



GRACEFUL EXPONENTS OF THE PICTURESQUE DANCES OF OLD SPAIN

These particularly charming Cuban girls, clad in remarkably picturesque dresses, are posed for the opening figure of one of their national dances. Colour and movement are dear to the heart of all the Latin races, and, for Spanish people especially, the rattle of the gaily-painted tambourine and the click of the castanets have a fascination that never palls

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service

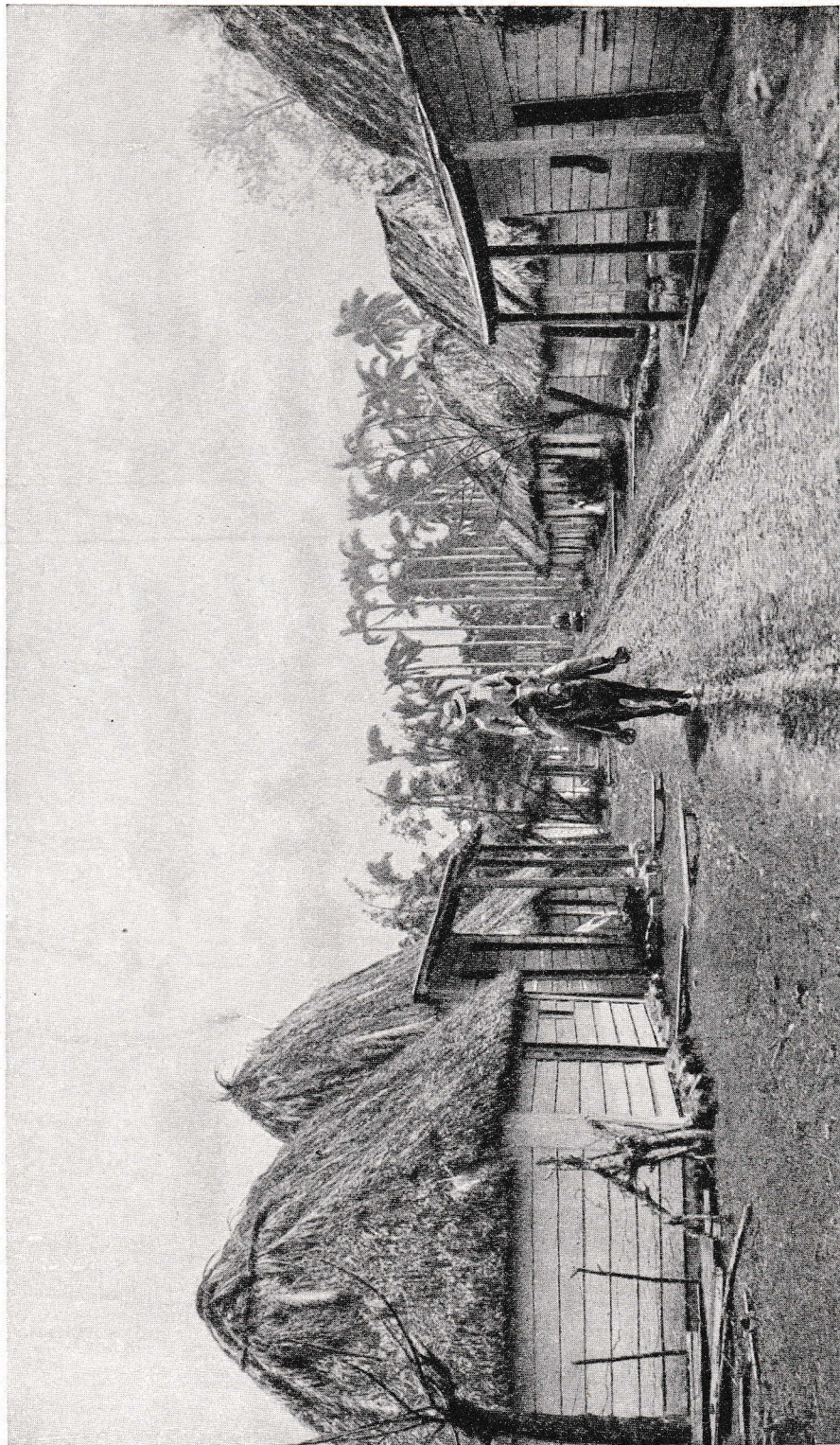
and all whispering of romance, the covered shopping arcades, the gentlemen greeting one another with demonstrative embraces, the bustling crowds—such are the things that combine to make Havana one of the most enchanting cities of the West.

Havana, in truth, is a town rippling with vitality and yet touched with the spirit of age and history. It produces something like a hundred daily and weekly papers, most of which are given over to an effervescing interest in ephemeral political issues. But this is only to say that Havana's atmosphere is South American and that its patriotism is gathered volubly into the net of politics. It is easy enough for the visitor to avoid the subject, just as it is easy for him to escape from the turmoil of Havana's streets into the exquisite peace of the surrounding country.

Havana's outskirts are celebrated for their wide, soft beauty, and they have historic importance, too, in the old fortress of the Morro, finished in 1597, and in the more modern Cabañas fortress, standing behind it on the ridge of the hill, finished in 1774.

But attractive though Havana be, the visitor who wants to savour the true Cuba should traverse the plains towards the east. He will begin to perceive then the enormous natural resources of the country and its incredible potential wealth. He will see for himself the life of the estates and absorb into his system the personality of Cuba.

The island needs what most tropical countries need—capital and labour. Her population is not adequate, and though it grows rapidly the term is only relative to the former population, not to the requirements. The United States and



DOWN THE VILLAGE STREET: COTTAGE HOMES IN WESTERN CUBA

Domestic architecture is elementary in Cuban country villages. One-storied, weather-boarded frame houses thatched with palm leaves are the rule, a plank over the kennel leading to the door, which occasionally is shaded by a wooden porch whereby the rainwater may fall a foot or two farther from the threshold. Windows are hardly in evidence and chimneys non-existent. Despite their general meanness these villages have a certain picturesqueness in their tropical setting

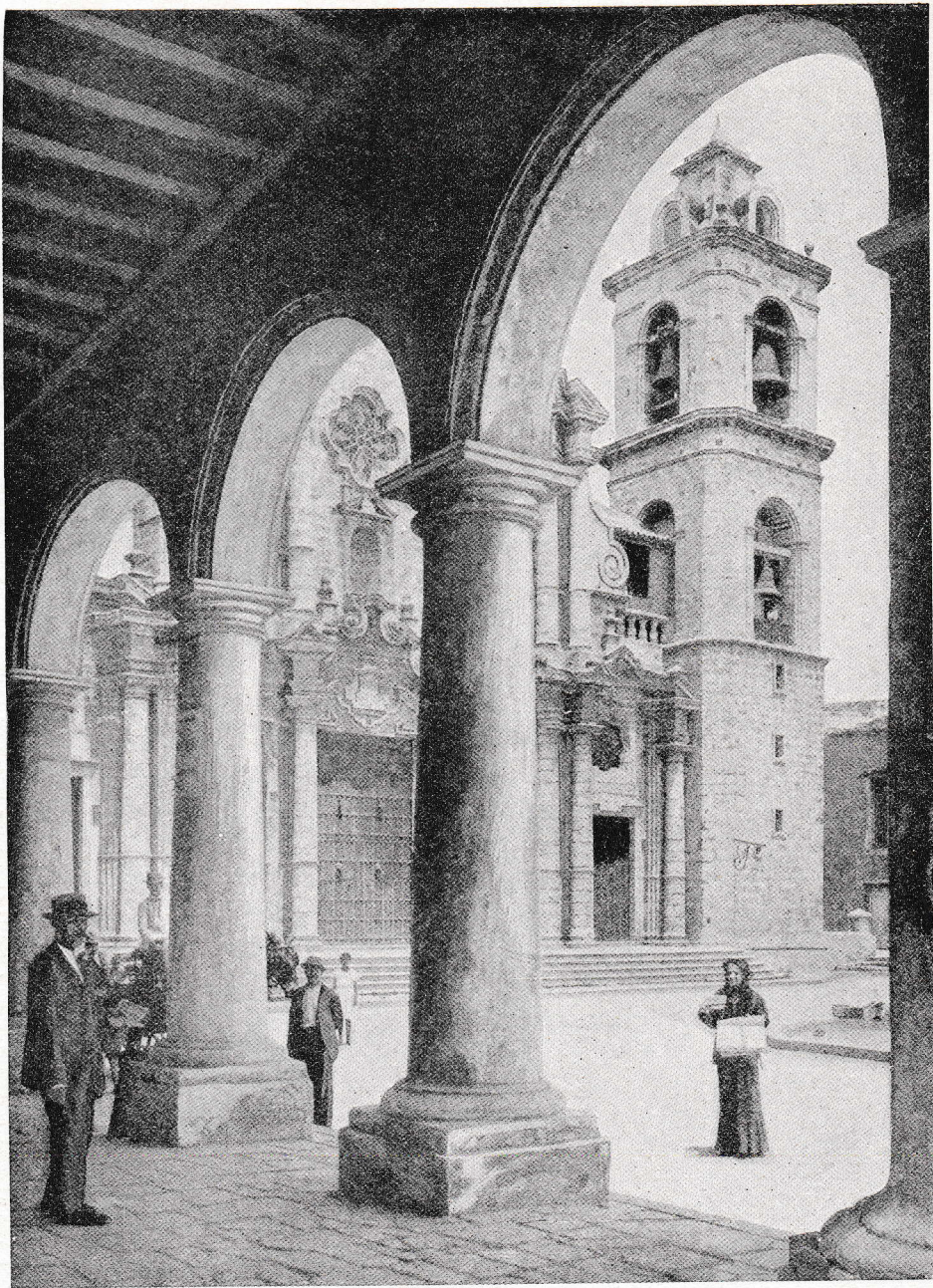
Photo. A. W. Cudde



WHERE YOUR DRAPER GOES HIS ROUNDS FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

In Havana it is the usual rule for the mountain to go to Mahomet and, in obedience to it, this gentleman in the dry goods trade is wheeling his establishment round the town. Fixed on a rickety two-wheeled cart, the store consists of a large glass case stuffed full of wares. What the proprietor cannot find room for within his perambulating warehouse he drapes more or less attractively over the top

Photo, A. W. Culler



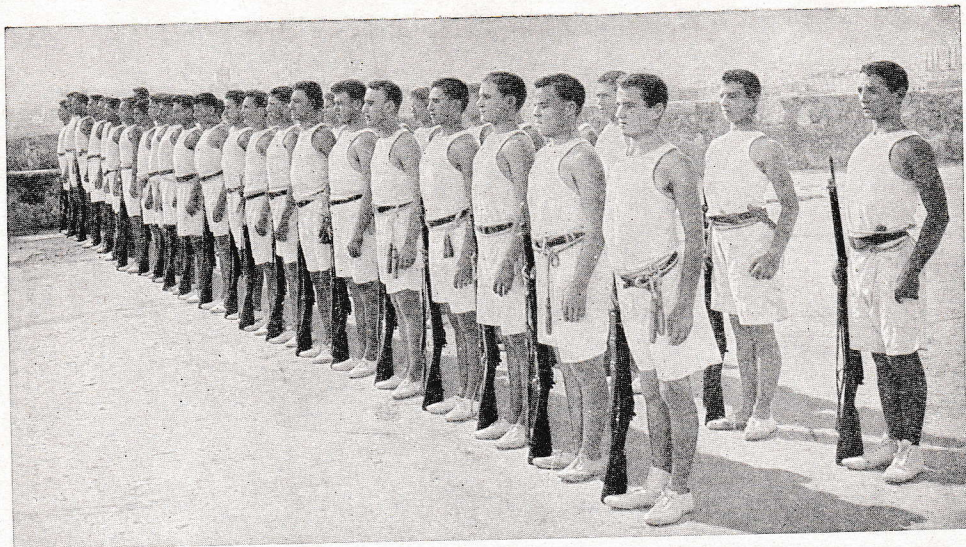
ONE OF THE ALLEGED RESTING-PLACES OF COLUMBUS

Havana's largest church is the Merced, the rococo cathedral seen between the arches of the adjoining colonnade. After Spain ceded the island of Haiti to France in 1785, the supposed remains of Christopher Columbus were removed from San Domingo to the chancel of this cathedral, where they remained until transferred to Spain in 1898. Their identity is, however, disputed by San Domingo, which claims still to possess those of the explorer

Photo, Publishers' Photo Service

Great Britain have done much to help Cuba in the past, either in the way of actual support or in the putting up of capital for enterprises, but her future

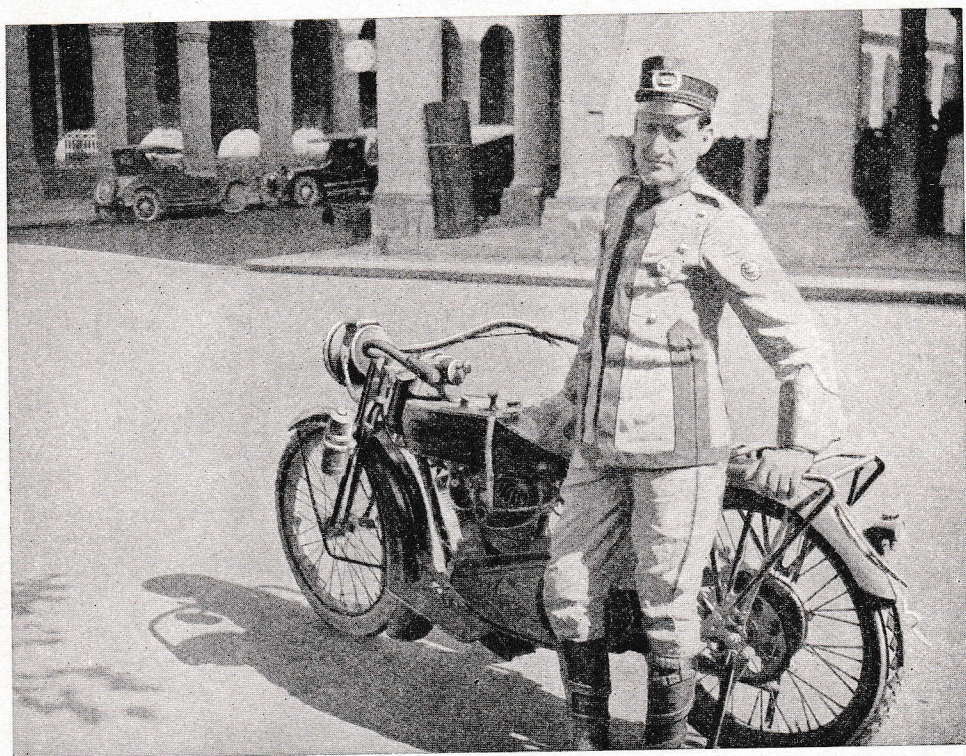
rests more in the character of the Cubans than in anything else. What is certain is that, given a fair chance, the soil will justify any amount of faith.



YOUTH'S PROUD FOOT SET ON THE STRONGHOLD OF OLD TYRANNY

Liberation from Spanish dominion has immensely enhanced the devotion of the Cubans to their native land. There is a certain symbolism in this photograph of a company of cadets of the Cuban military school, training on the roof of Morro Castle, the stronghold in which Spanish tyranny was established

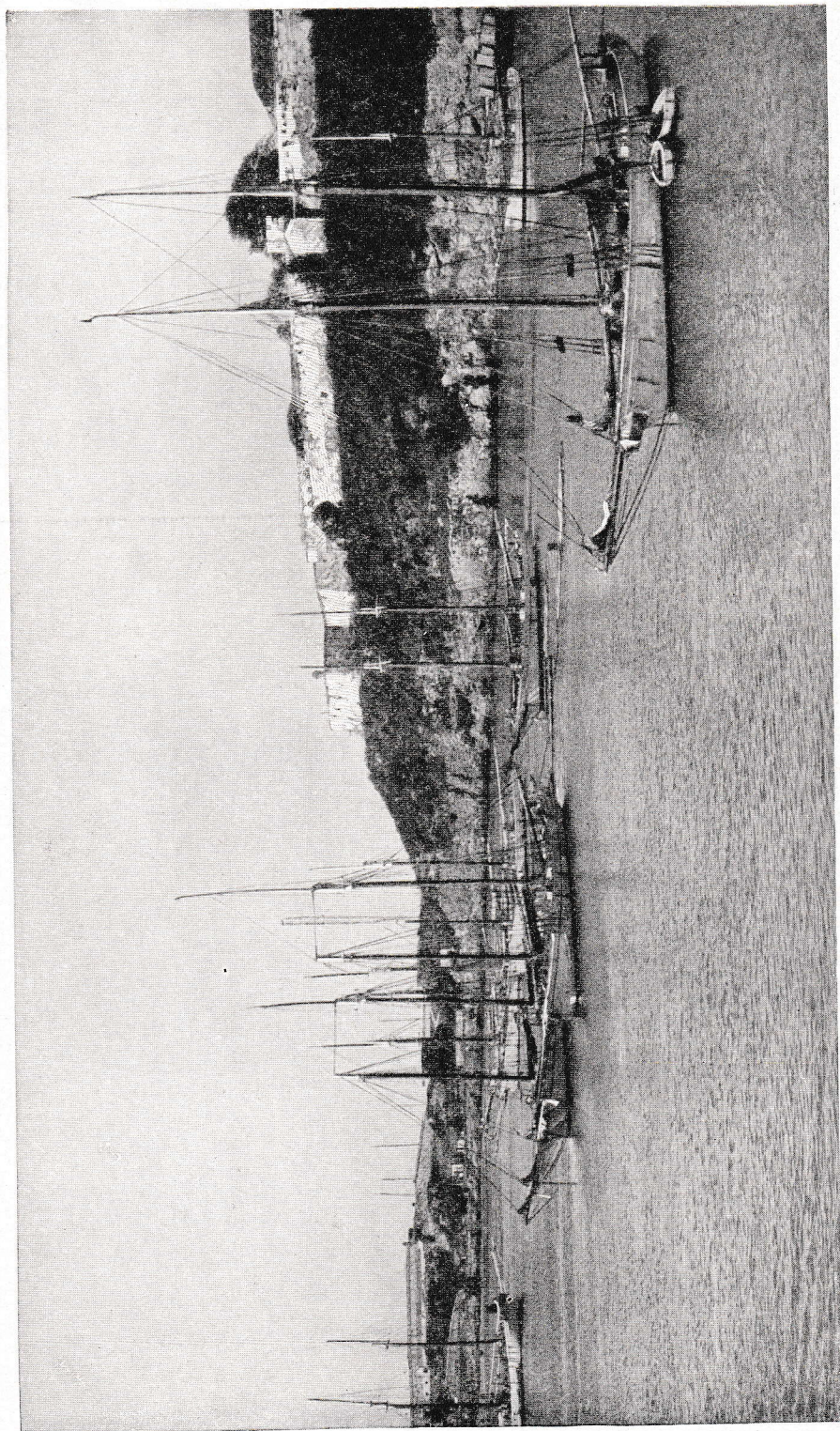
Photo, Publishers' Photo Service



ROAD HOGS BEWARE! A MOTOR-CYCLE POLICEMAN OF HAVANA

Havana is a particularly well policed city. Appointments to the force and promotion in it are made by examination, and, as elsewhere, it comprises both a detective force and the ordinary police service. A flying squad of motor-cycle policemen checks breaches of the law by motorists. There is an elaborate system of telephone communication between patrols and headquarters

Photo, Ewing Galloway



GRIM EMBLEM OF DEPARTED MIGHT THAT SENTINELLED A FORMER STRONGHOLD OF OLD SPAIN

Behind the peaceful fishing boats riding at anchor on the blue waters of Havana Harbor rise the old fortifications of the Spaniards. In the days when Spanish power was at its zenith in the West Indies, Havana was one of the greatest military strongholds. On the left are the walls of the old castle of San Carlos de la Cabaña, and on the right the lighthouse and part of the fortified wall of Morro Castle

Photo, Ewing Galloway

Cuba

II. The Island Under Spanish Rule and After

By Percy F. Martin, F.R.G.S.

Author of "Through Five Republics of South America," etc.

FOLLOWING upon its discovery by Columbus in 1492, and dating from its complete exploration and occupation (1494-1513), the history of Cuba, not inaptly termed "The Pearl of the Antilles," owing to its physical attractiveness, proved uniformly stormy and troublous, as have been all of the countries of the New World discovered and "civilized" by the Spaniards. The latter appear to have treated the original, peaceable, and unsophisticated natives with the same forbidding severity and frequent brutality exhibited in other of their Latin-American possessions. They speedily introduced the hated repartimiento system, otherwise a form of life-long slavery, the shelterless and dispossessed natives being compelled to work like beasts in the field, for their mere food, under taskmasters more merciless than any experienced under the *corvée* in Egypt. For close upon four centuries this was the Spanish policy. Without conscience, pity or justice, colonisation of the island was carried on, its great riches exploited, and the Crown of Spain enriched beyond computation.

Gradually the aborigines were crushed out of existence; gradually, also, the island became repeopled by negroes and other debased races. To-day, however, of the population, estimated at 2,889,000, about 72 per cent. are white (or almost white) and the remainder coloured.

In the persecution of the unfortunate natives the Church, mainly concerned with the collection of its tithes, took its full part. The Inquisition accounted for the death of a large number of so-called heretics, while the cupidity of hordes of officials played its part.

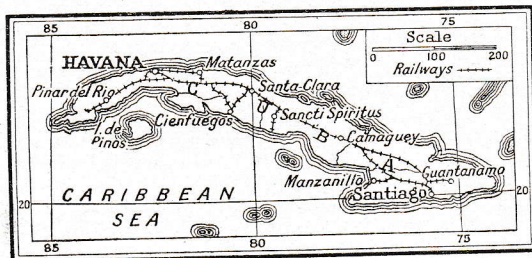
Seven of the earliest settlements established by Diego Velasquez, the first adelantado, or representative of the Spanish Crown, were followed by others. The immense mineral richness of the country brought about a high tide of prosperity between 1515-18, when enormous consignments of the gold, platinum, and

other precious metals, procured by ruthless application of slave-labour, were shipped to Spain. At this time Mexico, Jamaica, Florida, and all contiguous newly-discovered land was fused into the same nationality by the statesmanship of the Catholic kings; but local patriotism had no opportunity of asserting itself. The nomination of Las Casas, in 1516, as "Protector of the Indians," had in no way improved their unhappy lot.

While the Spaniards depended entirely upon military and naval forces for their maintenance in the country, social and commercial development were by no means wanting. Neither were the Spaniards allowed to carry out their task of "civilization" without opposition from other and competitive nations. Both the French and the British, being at war with Spain, harassed the island and its officials continually and effectively. During the reign of Charles V. of France the destructive activities of the former proved particularly aggravating; while the depredations committed by Jaques Sores, who, according to Pedro de Menendez, was "one of the best corsairs in all of France and England," gave the Spaniards endless trouble. The French declared that "God had not created the fair lands of the West Indies solely for the Castilians," and, determining that they should not enjoy them in peace, attacked Havana in 1555, taking the town in thirty minutes. Before releasing the numerous French prisoners they demanded and received a sum of 30,000 pesos, in addition to one hundred loads of cazabi bread.

Hostile English activity began as early as 1557, the outcome of personal hostility between Philip of Spain and Elizabeth of England, when a British merchant-

ship presented itself off Santo Domingo. The reputed mineral wealth of the island soon excited the envy of British buccaneers. Simultaneously with the waning of the influence of the French



THE ISLAND REPUBLIC OF CUBA

CUBA: AN ISLAND STORY

commenced that of the English. By the end of 1586, thanks to the dauntless energies of such pioneers as Sir Francis Drake and his countrymen, it had become formidable. In 1741 an English expedition landed, and in 1763, under Lord Albemarle, and assisted by American colonial troops, the British overcame the Spanish army and captured Havana. By the Treaty of Paris (1763) the island was, however, restored, and from that time until 1834

into a veritable vale of suffering and sorrow. All civil, political, and religious liberty was at an end, and never since Cuba had been a Spanish Crown colony had so much distress existed, nor had the administration proved so corrupt.

The burden of taxation, persecution, and extortion proved too heavy for the people to sustain; internal eruptions succeeded one another rapidly. Rebellion broke out in 1868 and endured for nearly



WHEN THE MEN COME HOME: EVENING SCENE IN SAN LUIS

Simple as it is, life can be very pleasant in these village homes of Cuba. The beauty of the country is an index to the wealth of its natural resources. Plantations of coffee, cacao, bananas, and coconut palms clothe the land with verdure and give profitable occupation to acclimatised inhabitants. Only better railroad communications are required to make Cuba an immensely wealthy country

the Spaniards were left almost unmolested to develop the island's enormous riches. The height of prosperity was attained between that period and 1790, when one of the best of the Spanish Viceroy's, another bearer of the name of Las Casas, was appointed Administrator of the island, and Cuba was opened to the trade of the world.

In 1808, after Napoleon had overthrown the Spanish dynasty, the position became modified. By the decree of 1825 the Captains-General of the day wielded a despotic authority hitherto unknown in any other Christian country; arrests, banishments, executions, and other punishments were visited upon the unhappy residents of the island, foreign and native alike, converting the fair land

twenty years, finally resulting in the abolition of slavery in 1886 and further enforced concessions by the Spaniards as a consequence of fresh revolts in 1895-98. The fierce and bloody war which then broke out was continued until the United States Government, from motives of humanity, intervened. This movement, at first intended to be peaceable, was speedily converted into actual warfare by the revengeful destruction, by some Spanish fanatics, of the United States warship *Maine*, which was blown up and sunk in Havana Harbour. In return, the Spanish fleet, under Admiral Cervera, was completely destroyed, while in April, 1898, the United States Government demanded the evacuation of Cuba by the Spanish troops. Between

CUBA: AN ISLAND STORY

January 1, 1899, and May 20, 1902, the island was administered under United States military rule, when, for the first time in its long and unhappy history, reforms of the widest character were substituted for the degrading government pursued under Spanish dominion.

Judging—wrongly, as it turned out—that the island was ready for autonomous government, a new constitution was formed in 1901, and in 1902 free suffrage was granted and the first President was elected, while two legislative houses were instituted. But the people proved themselves unworthy of the trust, and in 1906 the United States Government had again to intervene forcibly, remaining in control until January 28, 1909, when the second republican government was inaugurated.

Dr. Estrada Palma was the first President. He served his four full years, proving a firm, honest, and shrewd Executive. He was succeeded by Señor Osbaldia, and in 1909 by General J. M. Gomez, who served until 1913, his successor being General Mario G. Menocál, who had once previously filled the office of Chief Executive. In 1917 Cuba declared war on Germany, and in

1919 joined the League of Nations. Under General Menocál's administration Cuba reached almost the apex of its economic prosperity; but towards its close, reckless speculation in sugar brought about partial economic collapse.

Upon the retirement of General Menocál, a severe contest took place for the post of President, the candidates being Dr. Alfredo Zayas and General J. M. Gomez. Political feelings were excited, and the bitter partisanship resulted in the perpetration of violence, which only terminated with the sudden death of General Gomez. Unfortunately, Dr. Alfredo Zayas experienced a stormy period of rule. For the third time the United States were compelled to intervene—but upon this occasion diplomatically—on account of the alleged corruption and extravagance of the native Administration. The representations made and the severe official reprimands administered by General Crowder, the United States Agent, foreshadowing the removal of President Zayas and dismissal of Congress, seemed to prove effective, for a complete change in the President's policy was brought about, it was hoped, with permanent advantage.

CUBA: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

Chief of group of Greater Antilles and largest of West India islands. Separated on east from Haiti by Windward Passage, forty-eight miles across, and on south-east from Jamaica by about ninety miles of the Caribbean Sea. Coastline about 2,000 miles, total area about 44,200 square miles. Divided into six provinces: Havana, Pinar del Rio, Matanzas, Santa Clara, Camagüey and Oriente, with total population of about 2,889,000, about 72 per cent. whites, the rest mulattoes and negroes. Range of Sierra de los Organos on west with elevation of 2,530 ft.; on east forested Sierra Maestra, rising in the Pico Turquino to 8,400 ft. Rivers are the Cauto, Saza, Hatiguanico, Sagua la Grande. Ports: Havana on north-west; Santiago de Cuba, with fine harbour, on south-east. North coast bordered by coral islands and reefs. Language, Spanish.

Government and Constitution

Republic, with reservations as to treaties, commerce, debt, and use of naval stations in favour of the U.S.A. Government under President, Vice-President, Cabinet, and National Congress, including Senate of twenty-four members and House of Representatives of 118 members. Of the six provinces and 112 municipalities, each province is under a governor and council, each municipality under mayor and council.

Defence

Military service age twenty-one to twenty-eight. Army consists of between 16,000 and 17,000 men; navy, two cruisers, sixteen gunboats, four submarine chasers, and three small auxiliaries, with rather more than 1,000 officers and men.

Communications

Railway mileage 3,200, connecting chief towns and ports; 2,790 miles of private lines linking sugar estates with main lines. Nine Government

wireless stations and about 6,000 miles of telegraph lines.

Commerce and Industries

Staple industries, sugar and tobacco. About fifty per cent. of cultivated area under sugar cane, and thirty per cent. under tobacco, sweet potatoes, and bananas. Rice, coffee, cacao, maize, oranges, coconuts, pineapples are grown, and honey and rum produced. Forest products, mahogany, cedar, dye-woods, fibres, gums, resins, and oils. Live-stock includes about 4,000,000 cattle, 700,000 horses, and 64,000 mules. Mining area of 915,720 acres includes iron, copper, oil, manganese, and asphalt. Sugar crop 1919-20 totalled 3,735,425 tons from plantations covering 1,384,800 acres. In 1918-19 sugar exports were valued at £81,570,178; tobacco, £8,167,366. Total exports 1920 valued at £213,784,585; imports (foodstuffs, tissues and manufactures, machinery, metals and metal manufactures, and chemicals), £108,814,431. Bulk of trade with America, United Kingdom, and Spain. Currency of same fineness and value as U.S.A., coinage of which country is legal tender; unit, the peso of sixty cents. Metric system in use.

Education

Primary instruction compulsory. Kindergarten system and adult night schools developed. In each province Government institute for advanced education, with normal schools annexed for training of teachers. University of Havana, with faculties of liberal arts and science, medicine and pharmacy, and law, has over 2,000 students. Government schools in 1919 had about 6,000 teachers and 334,670 children.

Chief Towns

Havana, capital (population 363,500), Cienfuegos (95,860), Camagüey (98,190), Santiago de Cuba (70,230), Guantánamo (68,880), Matanzas (62,600), Santa Clara (63,100), Manzanillo (56,570).



SUNDAY MORNING AMONG THE RUTHENIANS IN PODKARPATSKA RUS

In coloured skirts and kerchiefs, embroidered sheepskins, and multitudinous rows of beads, they are awaiting the bell which shall call them to prayer. The Ruthenian Church is perhaps the most important of all Uniat Churches, and in religion the Ruthenians are nearly all Uniats, acknowledging the Pope, but still retaining their Slavonic liturgy and most of the outward forms of the Greek Church

Photo, Miss Florence Farmborough